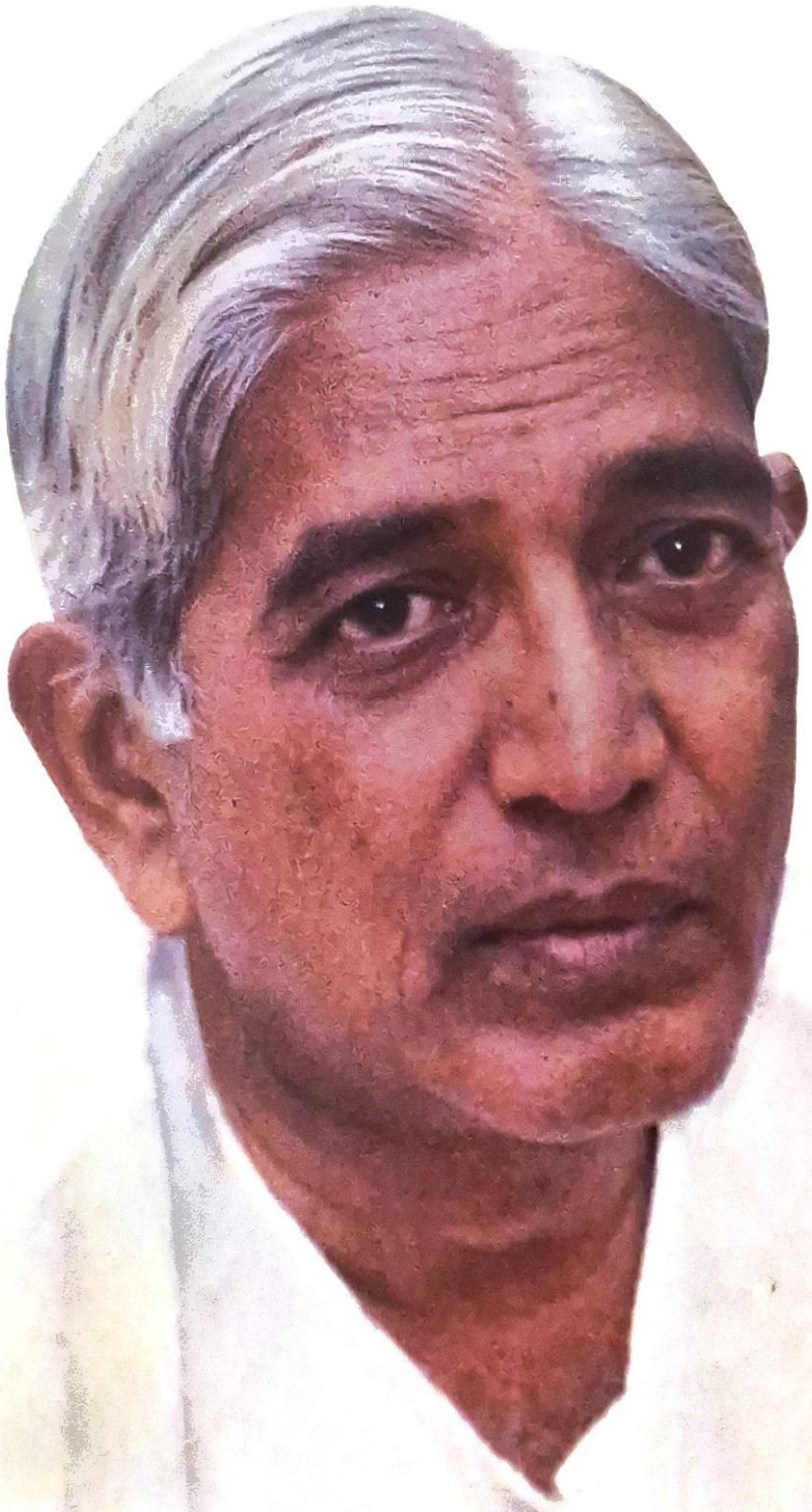
HEART TO HEART

VOLUME V



P. RAJAGOPALACHARI

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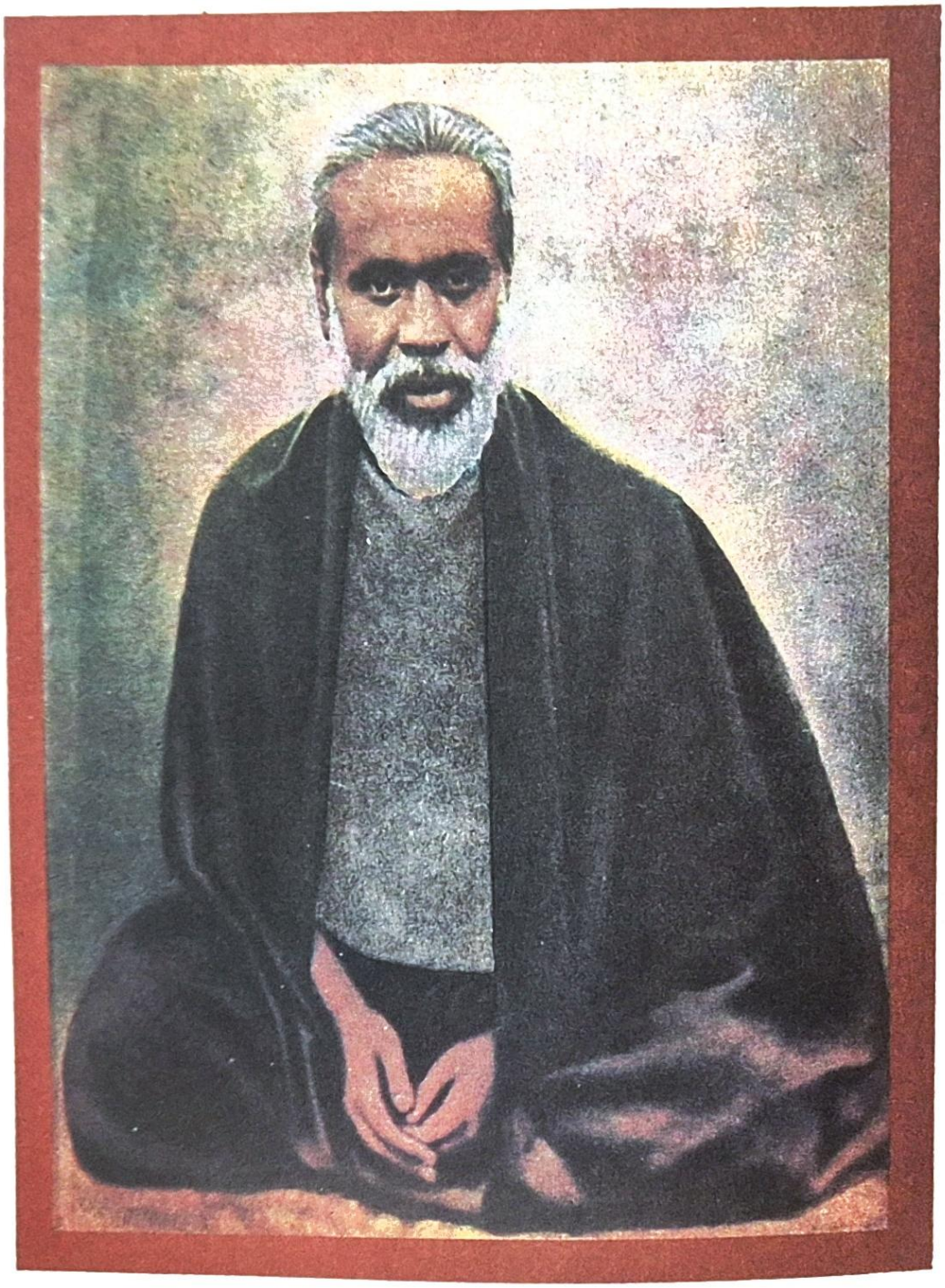

HEART TO HEART

Talks from seminars held in
North America, Europe, and South Africa
19 December 1990 through 1992

given by
Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

Volume V

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THIS VOLUME contains talks given by our Revered Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, outside of India, from December 1990 through the end of 1992.

During this time period, two additional books were published by Shri Ram Chandra:

- *Religion and Spirituality* contains talks given in Europe from the 9th to 17th July, 1991.
- *Love and Death* contains talks given in Europe from 14th August to 16th September, 1992.

The contents of both of these books are included as part of *Heart to Heart* Volume 5.

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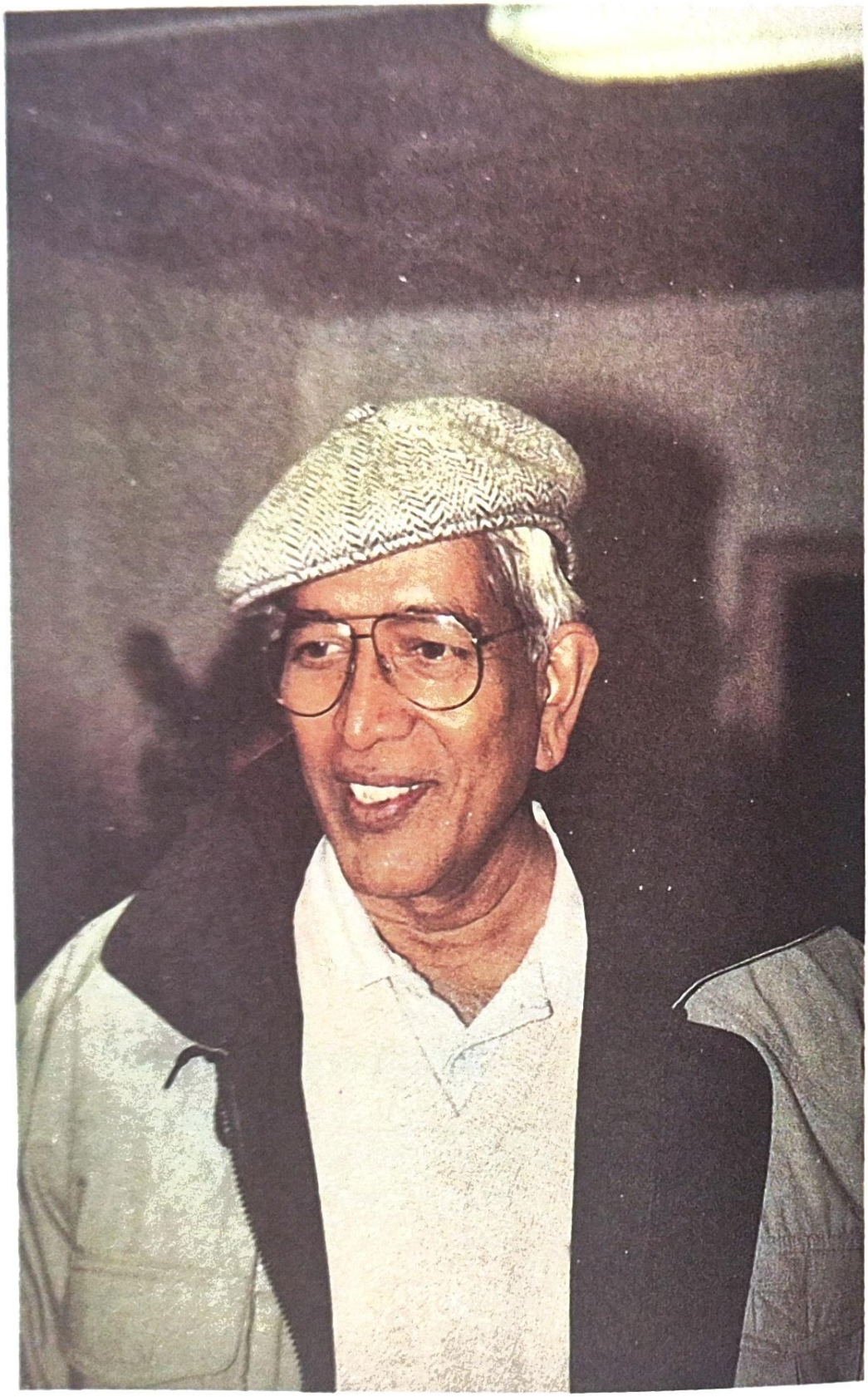
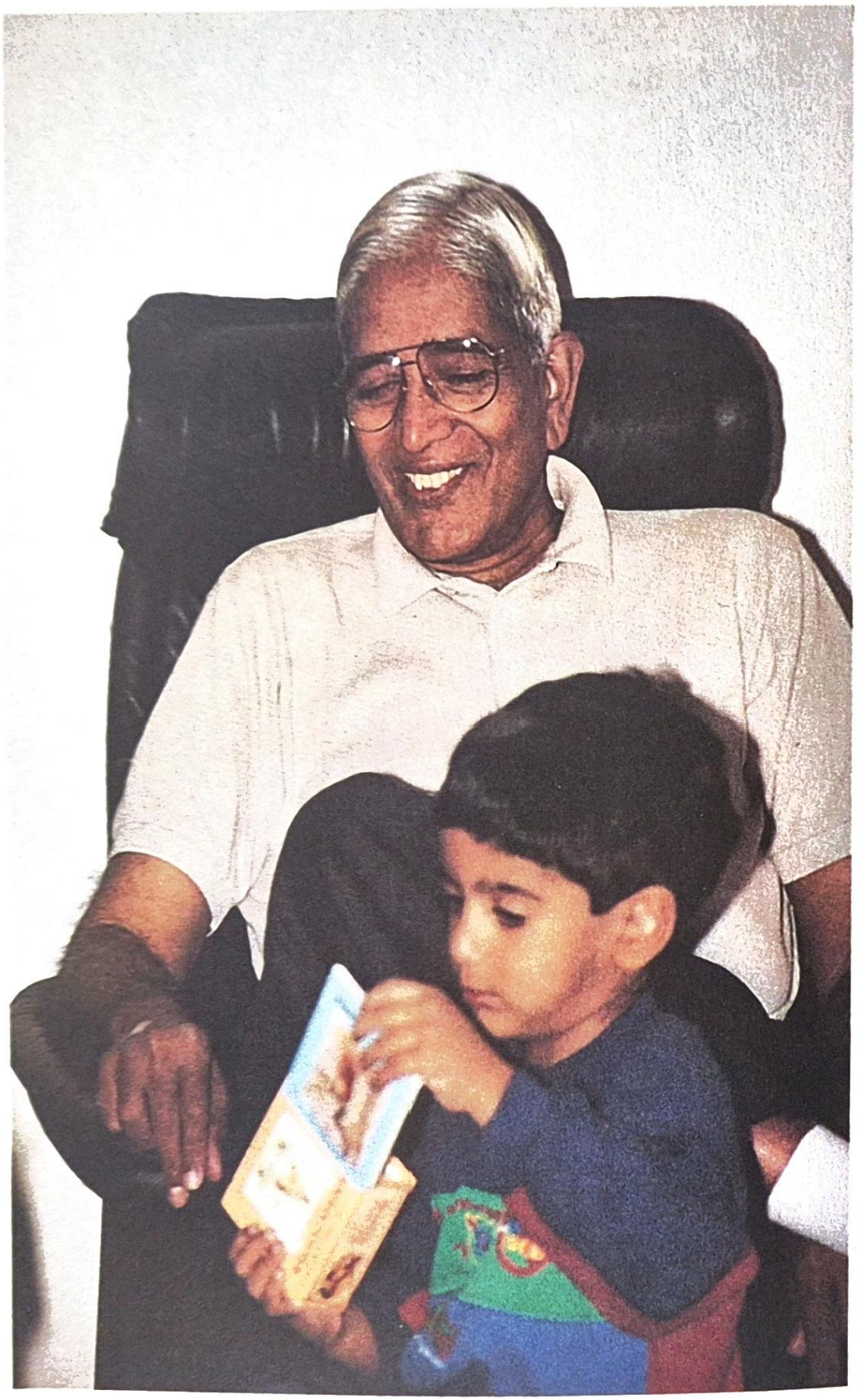


I

USA

19 December, 1990



1

CHANGE OF HEART

Atlanta, Georgia, USA
19 December, 1990

I don't know what to say. [laughter] Maybe I should stand up and speak. It's too crazy sitting and speaking. As you all know, tomorrow I'll be leaving, and before I leave I thought I should tell you I am happy to be here. Happy to see growth, progress in all of you, happy to see a lot of new people around and, if you don't mind my saying so, happy that I'm leaving, too. [laughter] Yes, I am happy to leave and I am leaving happily. That's a great thing. If the work were not good, I would be leaving unhappily and unhappy to leave. That I am happy to leave and leaving happily shows that by my Master's grace you have all made so much progress and I wish this pace of progress continues.

The brotherhood is cemented closer together because the Mission grows when we find a lot of nationalities, lots of colours, lots of tongues, blooming under one umbrella. It was always difficult for me to accept the concept of the Tower of Babel. That a mixture of languages and cultures should lead to confusion is something I can't understand. Because, starting from Noah's ark we have a pair of each, so many life forms, so many life values, I suppose. When God said, "Go forth and

multiply," I suppose he did not want a multiplication of confusion but a multiplication of the ability to live together, grow together, multiply together. I dare say there a lot of you here who have good deal of education in the Christian theology. But this is my understanding, you see, that there must be variety, there must be a great deal of it, and yet we must live together.

As an analogy, I can only offer your own body, where there are cells of so many different types, forming different organs — some solid, some liquid, some just membranes. So many different varieties of processes are going on — muscular, nervous, circulatory, osmotic — and that culmination of everything is the process by which the mind thinks. It is not the brain which thinks, you see, it is the mind which thinks. And according to our tradition, according to my understanding of what my Master taught me, the grand, summation, culmination of this process — by which a poor soul is able to embody itself, using a mind as a sort of an interface for communication. To me, the mind is an interface, a non-substantial, non-material interface between two dimensions of existence.

This is the reason why in raja yoga we work upon the mind through the mind itself: regulation of the mind, not control of the mind. No suppression, no distortion, no exaggeration. Using the mind itself to train itself, to regulate itself. Something like a motherboard in computers. I'm trying to pick up some of that, too, now. Once somebody asked me, "What are you doing with a computer?" I said, "Why not?" I know that people have ridden on donkeys, walked barefoot, but a saint doesn't become a saint only by riding a donkey or walking barefoot. I suppose a day will come when some future saint will go up in a satellite or in a space vehicle, you know, to visit his abhyasis in Venus. [laughter] I mean, it has to happen.

If Divine comes down to the Earth in a human form to train us, to accept us, to make us grow into something resembling Himself, I suppose He would like us to be like Himself in His activities, too. In India we have the tradition that there are seven worlds, you see, *saptha loka*, and a truly enlightened one, the truly ennobled one, the truly exalted one, must be able at will to go through these seven worlds instantly. So that is again by thought, by will power, the two of which conjoin to form what we call in Sanskrit *'sankalpa'*. A wish is a wish. If wishes were horses beggars would ride.

If will alone was enough, every boxer who slams his way to multi-million dollar victories would be presidents of the U.S. But that is brute strength, this is lazy thinking. The two have to combine into some sort of a magnificent, synthetic wholesomeness. A strong will coupled with a unique ability to think, to penetrate into matter itself, or into divinity on the other end.

So, this is the famous Sanskrit term 'sankalpa'. Babuji has always emphasized the need to have sankalpas, not just wishes. Our wishes are bar to our advancement. But a sankalpa can never be a bar. Why are our wishes putting a bar to our advancement? Because most often we are sitting in our easy chairs next to the fire, wishing, wishing, wishing.

These are all the various capacities which lie latent in us as potentialities in the human being. I think yoga is nothing but the ability, or developing the ability and the capacity, to manifest these latent potencies, latent potentials. As Swami Vivekananda said, "Every Buddha is a worm evolved. Every worm is a Buddha involved." So, there is nothing esoteric or wonderful about this process. It appears miraculous, it appears marvellous, it appears desirable, precisely because we have remained worms, thinking in a wormy way, burrowing ourselves deep into the world of materiality, thinking our worm holes are grand tunnels under the Atlantic and the Pacific, and fooling ourselves into thinking that because our

worm hole is bigger than some other worm's hole, we are greater human beings.

Material achievement does this to us. A man who earns two hundred bucks a month thinks he is greater than a man who earns merely a hundred. One who earns a thousand thinks he's a rich man. A millionaire thinks he's God Almighty himself. So, in material achievements there is only exaggeration of the ego, a tendency to pride, and a tendency to fooling oneself. In the spiritual empire, on the contrary, there is a dimensional change in one's achievement, in one's growth from the material to the spiritual using the medium of the mind, that is, the mind cum intellect. The combination of which gives us so many yogas with which we are familiar. *Karma yoga, gyani yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga*. According to the ancient tradition which is exemplified most of all in the Bhagavad Gita, raja yoga is said to be the highest, therefore it is called the king among yogas — raja yoga — because it deals with the kingly faculty in us, the culminating faculty in us, a mind which makes us conscious of ourselves, self-consciousness.

So, there is no empty reason for choosing raja yoga. It is not a whim or a fancy. Why not *laya yoga*, why not *hatha yoga*? Yes, the purpose is different. If you want psychic energies there are other yogas. If you want to develop physical prowess, that you can shoot a stone at Neptune and put it out of orbit, there are also yogas. Psychic *shaktis*. But if you wish to develop spiritually and to reach a dimension which is the dimension of infinity, or divinity as we call it, then as my Master put it, "We have to unlearn everything. Let go." Layer after layer we have to remove from ourselves until when the last layer is removed, there is nothing. In other things you are adding something, you see, knowledge, power, *siddhis*, *shaktis*.

Here we are to let go of everything, because according to our understanding of divinity, God has no power, but from

Him all power comes. God has no knowledge, but from Him all knowledge comes. God has no strength, but from Him all strength comes. He is not wealthy, but He creates a universe out of His non-wealth. Those who have money can only use what money they have, as you say, capital. Those who have knowledge can only use such knowledge as they have. You can't use knowledge which you don't have already. So, you go on acquiring.

But here, by dis-acquiring, a process of dis-acquisition, we reach the ultimate state which I propose that you accept as something like an atom bomb. From a tiny atom which is split, you can get the most extraordinary energies that we have ever seen on this Earth so far: cataclysmic energies, destructive beyond comprehension. So, if a mere atom can produce that, what should an atom of an atom be able to produce? And I suppose that is what in Sanskrit they have tried to state when they say God is "*Anoraniyan mahato mahiyan*" — smaller than the smallest. The atom of the atom itself. And "*mahato mahiyan*" on the other end of the scale: greater than the greatest, larger than the largest. So that, in its potential, in its absolutely self, what shall I say, cocoon-ized or self-embroiled form, it is a nothingness, but in its absolute manifest form, it is the universe.

So, if we want to go to the heart of the things, we want to go to the root of the matter, then we have to go to God in his absolutely minuscule atomic of the atomic form. If you want the grand, the luxurious, the glittering, the glamorous, seek him in the universe. So, the messages of the ancients are very clear. What is the clarity? That you do and you achieve. My Master's message was: if you read, you will enjoy; if you do, you can become. Here it is a process of becoming, not of getting something, not of achieving something, but of becoming that which you ought to be from that which you are today.

Sahaj Marg has a very simple message, a very natural goal, because it is the goal of human destiny, human evolution to the Highest. It is a goal which we have to inevitably achieve somehow or other. Hindu philosophy says it can take aeons of time, millions of births for those who are willing to believe in that sort of thing, but it also says you can achieve it here and now in this very life. Only the weak and the foolish put off for tomorrow what they should do today. The strong, the brave, and those who are set and determined on achieving their aims, do today what they should do even next year. This is the great message of the American modernity, you see — tomorrow's car here today; next year's model on display.

But when it comes to spirituality — "Oh, the spirituality of 2,000 years ago is good enough for us, Chari." In the American mind you have this rather indistinguishable trait, that they have equal value for antiquity and for post-modern moralities. On one side you treasure your antiques: a two hundred year-old oak tree on your lawn, a piece of pottery dug up from a civil war grave, and also the space shuttle that America will be setting out in the year 2030. Some factual, some conceptual, some actual, some imaginary, but the spiritual thing says, old or young doesn't matter.

Space shuttles, okay. You are still going to do the same journey in space. "I travelled to the Moon." Wonderful, but where did you go? What did you do there? You landed on another piece of earth, went underground perhaps, went into a domed enclosure with a lot of air being pumped in, or created by biomatter. But essentially you lead the same life. If you read science fiction you will find, you know, these space colonies as they are called — it's the same story all over again. Instead of having a television screen you have a whole wall which is a TV screen, and instead of having three channels you have a million channels. Instead of pressing buttons you do something else, I suppose think. And the screen flashes, again you see with these eyes, hear with these ears, speak with this mouth. And instead of eating Kentucky

chicken, I suppose you eat some other chicken there, some other whisky there. [laughter]

So, there is no dimensional change. You may go to the ends of this physical universe but your living doesn't change, except that you wear a suit to protect you from the atmosphere of those places, from the pressure or the non-pressure, but essentially, basically, you are leading the same life. Spirituality says that is no good. You have to change dimensionally. You have to change substantially — which means in substance. That is true change, that is permanent change, that is irreversible change. What is the proof that it is possible? Well you have a body, you have a heart which is not this heart. This heart is subject to tantrums. It beats — itself sometimes, others very often. It can fail, it can collapse, it can do so many wonderful things, funny things. But when you say a person has a good heart or a clean heart or a cold heart, I am sure you don't mean this heart.

So, we have hearts and hearts. When my heart is broken, it is not this heart. It is another heart. When he is soft-hearted, it is not this heart. It is again another heart. So, we have the physical heart and this transcendental heart of which you have no knowledge. We love with the physical, we damage the physical. You love with the transcendental heart, there is no damage to anybody. You shine like a light. Hide not thy candle under a bushel. Which candle? Not this candle which you are lighting up, but this candle which must radiate its light for all eternity. But who is to light that lamp? Therefore you need a Master, a Guru. And how to nurture it and keep it aflame? By practise.

So you see, by dimensional change it means a change of heart first, not any heart transplantation by some doctor in South Africa, but a conversion of your heart from a merely physical blood pumping station in your body, to a heart which resembles the heart of the Divine Creator who created us. This is why we meditate on the heart for this purpose in this

particular system of Sahaj Marg. That is why you meditate on the heart.

There are other points which have been, shall we say, honoured in Hindu yogic literature: the point of the nose, the point between the eyebrows, the third-eye point, but they are points which lead us to enormous powers, physic powers, trans-human powers, but not necessarily spiritual powers. In fact, I may beg brave to say not at all spiritual powers. In fact, to use the word 'spiritual power' is wrong because in spirituality there is no power. As I suggested in the beginning we have to give up all these concepts of having and doing, to not having and undoing ourselves. Throwing off layer by layer of ourselves until we come to that essence which has no form, no name, no attributes, which is the definition for the Creator, and therefore at that moment and from that moment on we are like Him in essence.

So, there is the process, there is the goal before you. And, as I was happy to remark, there is a progress in that direction, which I am happy to observe, for which I am grateful to my Master, because essentially it his work. I hope it will continue and that next year we shall be even more happy and glad to meet and to part.

Thank you.

II

FRANCE

1 January, 1991

-40
GEP!

2

THE GREATEST HAPPINESS

Augerans, France
1 January, 1991

First of all, happy New Year to all of you, and if you are all not too sleepy I would like to say something. During this meditation I was wondering why we are welcoming a new year. Essentially it is a hope that things will change. But then, people who have a happy life and are enjoying, are also welcoming a new year. It doesn't appear logical that they would expect to change something. They should like to continue the same way they're going. Isn't it? I can understand people who are in pain, who are suffering, wanting to change their situation by welcoming a new day, a new year. But that people who are happy, who are enjoying life, should also welcome a new year, which inevitably means change, seems something illogical. But, as in most instinctive human activity, there is a wisdom in it which we don't understand, because the human being must change all the time. Human life must change all the time. Otherwise, it would be like a book which reads the same, page after page after page. Who would like to read such a book?

I remember when I was reading *The Lord of the Rings*, which incidentally is one of the books I enjoy most, I could

not put the book down. And when it was ending, I was almost miserable. Those of you who have read that book know that it is full of misery, suffering, pain, adventure, and the only bit of happiness is in the beginning, and perhaps at the end. Human life is like that. There is some happiness when we are born, not for ourselves necessarily [chuckles], but for those around us; and when we die again there is some happiness, but this time only for the person who dies and not for the others. So you see, we have to think of these things and wonder what happiness and sorrow are about.

There is another thought which came to me during this meditation. Suppose a man is in debt, he would be happy only when he has paid off his debts. The man for whom debt repayment is going on and on and on is miserable. He would like to pay it off in one day if possible. I think in a sense suffering and pain are like that. Instead of avoiding it, we should try to get over it quickly because I think our suffering and our pain are our debts to our own past and if that is not repaid there is no future for us. Therefore, Babuji Maharaj says accept miseries as blessings because it gives us an opportunity of repaying our debts to ourselves very quickly.

Another important thing, suffering does not create samskara. Nobody is attached to suffering. We suffer but we don't want to suffer. So suffering does not create attachment, therefore does not create samskara. But enjoyment creates more and more samskara because the more we have of it the more we want. It is my conviction that a life full of enjoyment is going to be a life repeated again and again and again, and eventually we will build up so much samskara that there will be an enormous explosion of samskara in the form of some devastating pain. Which only means that pain is unavoidable. It is better to bear it in small doses, as and when it comes, without looking for it or seeking it or inflicting upon ourselves.

Many of the yogic systems in India made the mistake of unnecessary suffering inflicted upon themselves. They became ascetics but not saints. Those who enjoyed became nothing. So the way of hope, you see, is to hope for liberation, to be liberated more from pleasure and enjoyment which is one way of getting liberated from pain and suffering, because the less we are attached to pleasure and enjoyment, the sooner we are able to suffer for the past that we have created for ourselves. And therefore the saints have always spoken of the need to suffer.

I hope you don't think it is rather bizarre beginning to 1991 that I speak of this subject but please be assured that this is the way of the spiritual evolution. It is the quickest way to emancipation and those who wish to be liberated and to go beyond to the other stages of spiritual realisation and merger with the Master or the Divine, must learn to understand what we are talking about, must learn to understand what we are doing here or trying to do here and, more important, why we are here. If anybody thinks that we are in Sahaj Marg meditation to enjoy life and have a pleasant time, it is a negation of the goal for which we are aspiring.

I don't want you to misunderstand that there is no happiness in the Sahaj Marg way of life. There is enormous happiness. I can testify to it because I am living that life myself. It is the happiness of the man who is carrying an enormous burden on his head, which he can put down and be released from it. The pleasure of being relieved from pain is the greatest pleasure. The pleasure of getting rid of one's debt is more than the greatest riches. And the absolute conviction that one's life is being ended with a positive aspect to it free of all samskaras, I think that is the greatest happiness.

In spiritual language it is not called happiness, it is called bliss. Bliss is not magnified happiness. People normally think that bliss means enormous happiness. Bliss is something of a different dimension altogether. It has, if I may say so, the

idea that it surpasses both pleasure and pain, both suffering and enjoyment. It is a state of existence which is beyond both the opposites. Therefore, one cannot expect in the spiritually emancipated state to have an enjoyment which transcends earthly enjoyment. If that were the case, that existence would also have suffering transcending the earthly suffering. Therefore our goal is something very sublime. We get rid of both the opposites, we transcend all values, and go into a state of existence which because it is absolute contains nothing. That is the divine state about which my Master speaks: a state of nothingness. And on this auspicious occasion of the new year I pray to my Master to bless you all with that condition.

Thank you.

III

SOUTH AFRICA

13 to 22 April, 1991

3

He Gets, to Whom He Wishes to Give

Lenasia, South Africa
13 April, 1991

Just as a guideline for our interaction, my Master said that in spirituality we must have service without servility. We serve, but we are not servants. That is true for all of us: for preceptors, for abhyasis, when we work in the kitchen, any of these girls here. She is not a waitress or cook; she is a very respectable young lady serving others out of love and affection and a sense of service. When preceptors serve you, they are not your servants, nor are they your masters. They are there; they have accepted voluntarily to serve the Master. The Master says, "Give a sitting." They give a sitting. If the Master says, "Don't give a sitting," they have no right to give a sitting. They, too, serve without servility.

Of course, as far as the Master is concerned, you may think of him as you choose. He is your servant and he can be servile when it is necessary. He can be bossy if it is necessary. He can be anything that is necessary. It seems someone asked Dev Rambhai, to what caste I belong. He said I was a *dhobi*, one who washes dirty clothes, and a *chamaar*, you know what they say, a cobbler, because he repairs the soles. So, you are welcome to think me as chamaar. I was born a Brahmin, I

became a *kayastha*. Then I came to my Master, and today I am a chamaar.

It doesn't matter what I am. It is **what I can do** that is necessary, and it is what should be important to you. A *mirchi* which has no taste is no *mirchi*. A *gulab* [rose] which has no fragrance is no *gulab*. So, you should judge the Master by his work and not by what he appears to be, or how he is dressed up. Whether he is a Madrasi, or a Gujarati, or a Patidar — Patidar [chuckles] — we have enough Patidars here and we don't need one more.

Thirdly, I hesitate to give you orders at this moment, for my Master never gave orders. I shall also not give orders. He only gave suggestions. There are two reasons. The most important is the spiritual reason, the lesser important is a military principle. The military principle says never give an order which will be disobeyed, because it erodes the authority of the military. If you are sure an order will be disobeyed, don't give it. In the spiritual principle, if from my position I give you an order and you disobey it, you are culpable under two heads: one for not accepting what was said and the other for disobedience of the Master's orders. And my Master said, "In my love for the abhyasis, I don't want to put a second sin upon their heads when they are already burdened with one sin."

So, please don't expect any instructions from me. Instructions are there in the books. All of you are well-read, all of you have enough time. You should be able to understand. I don't want people to pretend that they have no understanding. I like genuine questions, but I also know when you are trying to heckle, or to fly me around like a football, putting your legs behind the other man's legs and trying to topple him. In Thanjavur, from where I come in the south of India, there is a doll with a round bottom — whichever way you knock it, it always comes up erect. Fortunately or unfortunately, I always land on my feet.

Throughout the world, people are trying to topple me in one way or the other, in one sense or the other. I shall be toppled only if He wishes it. But in our relationship, whatever you may think of me, it is not important. I am what I am because He says what I am, not you. Your decision is to accept me or not. If you don't accept me, there is nothing wrong with it. I mean, there are many beautiful girls who remain unmarried for some reason or the other. That a girl is beautiful, doesn't mean automatically she should be married. That a man is rich doesn't mean that he should get married either. I don't know many rich men who cannot get married. I know many ugly girls who get married just like that [snaps fingers], and many fools who are consulted for everything, and their advice turns out to be good.

So, you should follow this old Christian precept: "Judge not that ye be not judged." First of all, we don't know how to judge. I spent thirty years with my Master. I still don't know what is a Master. People talk so much about Master and this and that, "he's spiritual light, divine personality, he's special personality" — as if you know what he is. What is a special personality? Does anybody here know? What a Master does, does anyone here know? You know Babuji, but do you know what is a Master?

So, we are all going by hearsay and personal likes and dislikes. We liked Babuji because he was an innocent, inoffensive old man, smiling all the time, who was willing to be moulded by you, rather then to try to mould you. That was his greatness; that was your loss.

It is like a plastics moulding factory, where the plastic is not moulded, but the owner of the factory comes out moulded into the same form. It's a crazy thing that is going on.

So, we all love Master for different reasons, most of them superficial. That he was kind, that he never disturbed us, that he never demanded things from us, that he ate what was given to him, he slept where he was put. All wonderful

qualities. I am also trying to emulate this. But what was it in him that made him a Master? You have not understood that. It is not only the fault that you are South Africans, here, it is the fault of abhyasis all over the world.

It is my fault too. I still don't know what is a Master. It is like a father, you know, he doesn't know what is a father. What is being a father? His father says, "Now you are a father, you should not behave like this." He says, "But papa, what is being a father?" "You have a son, that is being a father!" But then he says, "Pigs have children, dogs have children, cows have children, donkeys have children. Are they fathers, too?" He says, "Yes, but they don't know it, and if you don't know you are a father, you are also one of that category of dogs and pigs and cows and whatnot!"

So, the human being must be conscious that, when I have a son I am a father, till I have a father I am a son. When I have no son, I cannot be a father. But there are fathers who are not married, perhaps, and yet have the world as their children. They are the great souls of this world. And the special personalities — for them, all are their children. They suffer from these children. All of you are married, all of you have children. You know how much suffering one child can give. The joys of parenthood are lies. They don't last very long. They last as long as the child is about three years old. After that, there are only troubles and travails. When the child becomes self-conscious, when it wants to assert its authority, when it wants to grab something, then, you know, "What is this I have produced? A *shaitan* [devil] or a deity?"

So you see, while the child is innocent and undemanding and looking at you and smiling nicely with its toothless smile, we are very happy, proud parents. Turn three years or three and a half years and the child says, "Now I want." "Go to the toilet." "No!" "Eat breakfast." "No!" Then comes the problem why we have children at all. Babuji was in that state of a child — toothless smiles, wriggling its toes at everybody. He was

loveable, and I don't think anybody could have resisted his attraction, other than the absolutely most degraded people. Nobody could ever have resisted my Master. I could not have resisted myself. You know, I am a very strong fellow and I couldn't care less for spirituality and all this hubbub, you see, but I couldn't resist it. I fell into the trap of his love.

The first time I went, I was finished. Many times I have told him, "You are a sly blighter, you see, you are like this black widow spider, waiting in the middle of his web, and you caught me." He said, "Yes, but I didn't catch you, you were caught." So, there is a difference between being caught and allowing oneself to be caught. It is like a nice young girl, you know, who throws a handkerchief on the street, and the boy behind picks it up and he is caught. Later on she may say, "No, no, my handkerchief fell naturally. Why did you pick it up? It was not supposed to be picked up by you." All this blah blah is of no use. You are caught, you are trapped, you are finished.

So, my Master's trap, when I could not avoid, I don't know how you can avoid it. But, having been caught by him, having loved him, presumably still loving him, should you not obey him also? Because love is obedience and obedience is love. There are two ways of obedience. One: what you have in South Africa, the iron shoe and the iron fist. If you disobey, you die. That's why you have Lenasia and all these settlements. You may be millionaires but you are third grade citizens in a country which doesn't want you. And you try to put up your nice suits and your nice ties and pretend that you are nice, build up Patidar halls. All to boast, with an inner feeling of utter degradation, unaccepted-ness, unwanted-ness, and insecurity. What is a millionaire in Lenasia worth? If you are a millionaire in your own country you have *izzat*, you have respect. Here there is only insecurity. There is no use blaming the whites. What were the blacks doing? What were the coloureds doing all these years?

So you see, the very airs that we put on betray our inner insecurity. All these flashy Mercedes Benzes and Opel Kadettes and all this, you know. It's nice from the outside, but "All is not well in the state of Denmark." You never know when you are going to be kicked out. You don't know what the next law is going to say. After America agrees that all the parameters set about have been accepted by South Africans, the government and the sanctions are removed, you don't know what is going to happen then. Even today, I heard people discussing that this is all a temporary change.

I heard about a hospital that the whites have built up on the hill, which, when it was only for the whites was available to whites at a cheap rate, but when it had to be open for all, the rates have been put up so high that only whites can afford it. See, there are ways and ways of segregation. It happens in a family: you don't like your daughter-in-law, well, there is a very quiet way of sidelining her, you see. "*Nahin, nahin, Bahu, tum so jao, tum bimaar ho*" ["No, no daughter-in-law, you go to sleep, you are unwell."] "No, no, but I am not sick, for heaven sake!" "*Aha, yeh tumhari bhalai hai.*" ["Aha, this is your kindness. You are such a sweet girl, you'll never accept you're sick."] And a healthy, beautiful girl, just because the son is mad after her and the mother-in-law doesn't want it, she separates them with such a beautiful, wonderful, buttery knife. In three years there is a divorce. So you see, these tricks do not work.

And in spirituality, we are Indians, we are Sahaj Margis. Should we not learn to unite what is being tried to be destroyed here? Should there not be a humanity that is brought into our society here? Should we not forget that a white is a white man, and black is a black man, and a coloured is a coloured, and a woman is a woman, and a man is a man? Should we not rise beyond our mere human circumstances? Then what are you doing dividing yourself? What are you Patels doing but creating two Patel societies? High-point Patel society and low-point Patel society. [laughter] What is this

nonsense? Where there should be unification, where there should be trust, where there should be love, when we have had enough of apartheid — which is destroying us by colour consciousness, race consciousness. You are creating within yourself a divided society.

If I were a Mandela or a De Klerk, I would say, "First set your house in order, gentleman and ladies, before you come to me to be recognized as equals to the whites. What are you blighters doing?" I would ask, "Are you not ashamed that in a spiritual setting, in a spiritual organization, you are two and three groups?" And you have the cheek to come to me and say, "Dissolve your apartheid policies." "How do you deserve it?", I would ask, if I were De Klerk.

So, the time has come when, out of spiritual craving, spiritual yearning, spiritual acceptance of the Master's teaching, we have to become one — a single Sahaj Marg society where all are welcome: blacks are welcome, whites are welcome, not because we say, "You are black, you come," or, "You are white, you come," but because I have no consciousness of what is black and white. If Sahaj Marg does not achieve this, it is not fit to be called Sahaj Marg. If the Master is not able to bring this about, it is not his fault, it is your fault.

So you see, for many reasons we have to set this house in order. We have to forget our past. We have to realise that people can change. We must accept people for what they are today and not revile them for what they were three years back. Remember what Vivekananda said: "Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future." You shall not deny this for other human beings. I mean, this is an absolutely spiritual order, a precept. Thou shall not deny to others what thou shalt have to seek for yourself. All of you need compassion.

There is no multi-millionaire who has not been a crook in his life. Let one stand up and say, "I was." I will have his accounts audited and see what he has done. You cannot be a

millionaire without having done *hera pheri* and broken tax laws, broken many hearts. It's not possible. So, what is this living in glass houses and throwing stones at others? One day you will have stones thrown at you, too. "Let him cast the first stone who has not sinned," Christ said, when the adulteress was about to be stoned to death according to old Jewish law, the old Hebraic law, perhaps. And nobody dared to throw a stone, because the very adulteress they were going to stone they had all enjoyed once or other time, you know, on the sly.

Remember, what man does not see, God sees. What man cannot see, God will see. What man should not see, God must see. And if he sees everything that you are doing, there is no person here who does not need his compassion and his mercy. And to throw stones mutually among yourselves that, "He is a crook and I am a great man," is the absolute stupidity of a child. I am not seeking from you compassion for another person, nor am I seeking from you justice. You are all incapable of justice and compassion as you are. I only want you to think of what you are, and then to decide whether you have the guts to cast your finger at somebody else, remembering the principle that when one finger is held out against somebody else, there are three pointing towards yourself. Let one who has the courage to do it, do it.

So you see, we must remember what Babuji said, that, "Today, there is no individual soul on earth which deserves spirituality." It is his statement, my Master's statement. Then I said, "What are you giving to them?" He said, "It is charity. I am throwing *tukadas* and they are picking up whatever they can." What a shame, that he is throwing pieces and even those few pieces we are not able to pick up. What will we do when he wants to give us everything he has? If you come with your hearts full of hates and loves, prejudices, follies, there is no place for him to put anything into you. "Empty yourself and come as an empty vessel," is the first lesson of Sahaj Marg. If it is already full, nothing can be put in it. Every person knows this.

If you have already milk in your vessel, the *doodh wallah* comes and you say, "*Aaj nahin chahiye, Nahi mataji nahin lijiye, Nahin bhaiyaa, doodh aya he.*" ["Your rice bin is full of rice; you don't go to the market to buy some more, because the bin is full."] But the heart is full of rubbish, mostly hatreds, very little love. The modern heart has become incapable of love, precisely because you cannot love yourself as you are. This is not spirituality; this is the merest psychological truth, that he who cannot love himself cannot love anybody else. So, when I see manifestations of hatred against a few individuals in the satsangh, it shows how much they hate themselves. And I say, "God have mercy on these creatures. Teach them to love themselves, so that they may love these other blighted people."

You know, when you expect mercy and compassion, or you will expect, or you have expected, how can you deny that to another soul or other souls? It is His business to be merciful, to be compassionate, to forgive. When a mere president of a country can release prisoners at will, because it is his birthday or his predecessor's birthday, how can you deny that right to one who is in the position of God himself? You have put him there. Babuji is God; Babuji is a special personality. If you have done it with your heart, you cannot deny to him his absolute right to pardon who he will. To bless who he will. It is not your right. He doesn't need your sanction. He doesn't need your approval. It is his sublime, divine right to forgive, to bless. You cannot question what he gives to someone, "Why he gave to this guy and not to me?" That, too, is his business.

If you have read the books of Sahaj Marg, you must have learnt at least by now, that sadhana does not give you any right to an iota of spiritual blessings from the Master. I repeat, sadhana does not give you even the merest iota of a right to any spiritual blessing. Babuji has said, "He gets, to whom He wishes to give." If you cannot attract his gaze of love towards

yourself, your sadhana is a waste, your sadhana is a failure, whether done absolutely correctly or not, it does not matter.

So, people who say, "I am meditating. I am sincere. Why should I come?" Well, for this reason, you see. Babuji Maharaj was quite upset when people didn't come for satsangh. I told him, "So many people don't come because they don't like the place, they don't like the preceptor, they like their own homes, etc." He said, "Tell them that only those who are in the satsangh, in which I instruct them to sit, they appear before me in my vision. Such persons are always in my presence. To them my heart flows out naturally. If they are not in that vision, then I am not responsible for their future." This is Babuji's statement to me.

It is like a television camera. If you are not in front of the camera, you are not going to be in the picture. So, when he says, "Come to such and such a place, sit before such and such a person," if you are interested in anything other than your own ego and your prominence in society and your wealth, you will kindly go and sit there — otherwise, forget spirituality.

So you see, all these teachings have to be told to you for your benefit, time and time again. This is a tradition of India, where even the avatars have to come again and again. God himself has created my country in your country. "*Yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati bharata. abhyutthanam adharmasya tada atmanam srijamyaham*," something which goes on several *slokas*. The meaning is, "Whenever there is need, I come again and again to set my house in order. To destroy the evil-doer, to re-establish dharma, and to protect the good." Don't you think it is a shame that even God's work can be so badly smudged and mauled about that He has to come again and again. What to talk of gurus, what to talk of special personalities, what to talk of other things?

If we have one pride in India — and this is one thing you should be rightly proud of — that we can sin so much, be unjust so much, be ungrateful so much, that that darn God has

to come before me every time. No other country has succeeded in this! [laughter] India is great all because avatars appeared only in India. All the Ravanas and asuras appeared only there. All the divine wars were fought only there — the Mahabharata. "What are you talking of World War II, Sahib? Look at Kurukshetra." "Oh, why was it so great?" "We are the only nation which can bring God down to earth." [laughter] But is it a matter for pride, or is it a matter for shame?

That God has been so benevolent, so loving, is His nature, not our goodness. It is not the power of my hate and of my treasonous thinking and of my illogicality and of my perversions that God comes. It is because of His love He comes. It is like a mother who rushes to a dirty child to change his clothes. If the child says, "Every time I become dirty, my mother comes to me. Let me remain dirty," it will be spanked. The time will come when it will receive a gentle spank, a harder spank, and then poor old papa will have to come into the picture to discipline the child.

So, let us not carry this too far and wait for the eleventh avatara, which has not been promised — only ten have been promised. I believe nine have gone. The tenth, God forbid, when it comes, will bring destruction with it. Because that is also predicated upon society, you see, that we shall be so degraded, so lustful, so stupid, that but for destruction there is no way.

So, if you are truthful to the teachings of Sahaj Marg and to yourself, if you are sincere about Sahaj Marg practice, each one for himself or herself, the Master should never have to come to you. You should go to the Master.

You know, some people in India are very proud that the Master visits their centre again and again. Half jokingly I tell them, "What would you think of your neighbour's house if every day the doctor visits it?" What would you think? "Oh! somebody must be sick. He makes two visits a day." You say, "Baba, what is going wrong? Twice a day the doctor is

coming. What is wrong there?" Specialists start arriving. It is not a matter for pride that my doctor comes to me every morning. It is a matter for the utmost concern.

That the avataras come again and again to India is a point of degradation of that society, to its peoples. Not for nothing does God come, and then God himself has to come to set that perverted society on its feet again. It shows how degraded the Indian is. Please don't bring that degradation with you here. Please don't bring those caste hatreds here, those prejudices here, and those temples here. We have had enough of them in that country. You ran away from that country to seek prosperity. Seek it totally. Seek it in your material life. Seek it in your spiritual life. Give up all these depraved practices, stupid practices, unrecommended practices. "How can you say this?" Well, I am not saying it, my Master has said it. You read *Reality at Dawn*. "They are but functionaries of Nature." He is talking about Brahma and Vishnu and Shiva, and you should take their service, not worship them.

So, the lesson is clear. I can only surmise you people don't read even Gujarati books, and you allow your own egos and your pride to loom large in a spiritual atmosphere where it becomes even more inflated. This is a serious matter, because I suppose even a Master's patience can be limited, even God's patience can be limited, not because we are impatient with nature, but because there is so much to do. I mean, there are teachers here. You respond to a student who is willing to learn better than you respond to a student who is running away from class every day.

So, given the need to use the time available to us — we are all human beings, Master or no Master — we have to use that time to the best possible effect, where it will have the most effect. And, as Babuji said, "Deserve and then desire." So, to make yourself deserving is your duty. When you are deserving, to fulfil that deservingness is the Master's duty.

I pray that you will all become wiser to yourselves, to your need for spirituality, to the absolute need for spirituality, remembering that all your Mercedes cars, your beautiful houses, you will leave behind one day. None of it is going to accompany you. That which will accompany you is your Master. Listen to him, accept him, obey him, and be blessed by him.

Thank you.

4

LOOK TOWARDS THE LIGHT

Lenasia, South Africa
14 April, 1991

One important message of today's talk — somebody mentioned about the past. Babuji Maharaj put it beautifully. He said, "When you look towards the sun, you see the light. If you turn away from the sun, you see your own shadow." It is a very important message, because there is nothing in the darkness to frighten us, except our own shadow. We cast our shadow when we turn away from the light. We are frightened by the shadow, thinking it is some sort of a ghost, and the further away from the light we are, the longer the shadow becomes. This is a fact of science, and eventually we start running away. But you know, shadows cannot be separated from the self. Then we are in the shadow world of illusion, frustration, fear, desolation, and misery.

So, the first message is, **always look towards the light!** It may blind you temporarily, you see, but then that is why the Master is there. I remember once, after I was made a preceptor in 1967, Babuji gave me some work to do which I was a bit frightened to do. I was not really shirking my work, but delaying it, and doing it in a sort of a superficial manner. Babuji came and said, *"Kaam tumne nahi kiya abhi tak."*

["You have not done the work yet."] I said, "Babuji, I am a bit afraid because this is so delicate. Suppose the work is spoiled." He said, "It is good you made this, you expressed your fear to me. Just put between the abhyasi and yourself the heart of the Master, and transmit to the heart of the Master. He will take care of the rest." I did it, and according to my Master, I don't know if it was praise or encouragement or the truth, perhaps all three, that work was finished to his satisfaction in one sitting.

So you see, putting the Master's heart between yourself and the abhyasi to whom you are transmitting as a preceptor makes sure that the work will be perfect. The reverse technique also works: put the Master's heart between you and everything else in this world, which is what constant remembrance should really be. That is the heart which must be even between you and your wife. When you say, "My heart," — the husband may say it to the wife or the wife may say it to the husband — each one must look at the heart of the Master which is between them, cementing them almost for eternity and guaranteeing that what passes between the two of them, even in the most intimate moments, is the true love of the Master. Without that it is only mere animal lust, human love, which, even at its best, is selfish and self-seeking.

We must all remember the old message of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, where Yagyavalkya the great *rishi* had two wives. One was a materialistic wife: she only sought pleasure from her husband; security, wealth perhaps. The other was spiritually inclined, and she said, "Teach me!" Yagyavalkya's first lesson to her says, "Not for the sake of the wife is the wife beloved to the husband, my dear, but it is for the sake of himself that he loves his wife." So you see, all this love that we talk about is really love of the self.

Babuji Maharaj used to tell me — I remember once when we were in Germany he got a letter. I said, "There is a letter for you from such and such a person." He said, "It is

useless. Throw it away." I said, "Why do you say that? It is not even opened." He said, "I know what he has written. He will say, 'You are the Master of both worlds. I love you. Above you and all, I love nothing else in this universe. Oh my Master, etc.'" When I opened the letter, these were the very words.

So you see, the Master knows his abhyasis in and out. We, in our ignorance, seek to hide from him, turn away from him, but the shadow is worse. So, it is better to make a brave job of it and face the old fellow, you see, and say, "Here I am, it is not my fault."

In a sense this is very true, because what we are doing, what we are thinking, is under the pressure of the samskaras that we have brought with us. If one man is good, he is not good because he wants to be good. Perhaps he is afraid of being bad. Most people who are truthful and righteous are afraid of being bad and thought of as bad persons. Bad people are bad, not because they want to be bad, but because their samskaras will not permit them to be otherwise.

We are like those old Japanese toys we used to have in India: wind up the spring, one toy clapped its hands, the other made some noise, the third one blinked its eyes and walked on. They could not do anything else. Each one was programmed to do something; it did it. Therefore, Babuji said, when I wrote to him about a brother abhyasi and a colleague, that, "I am beginning to hate this man," he wrote back to me and said, "Remove this hatred from your heart. Otherwise it will poison your own growth in spirituality." When I got this letter, it was in my office. I just imagined, you know, with Master in my mind, that I put my hand into my heart and brought out this hatred and threw it away, and that was the end of it. In one instant of time I achieved it, and after that my growth was, according to Babuji Maharaj, stupendous.

Then I asked him, "Why did you write this letter to me?" He said, "You know, no man is bad. His actions may be

bad, his attitude may be bad. It is for you to correct it. No man is really good. His worth may be good, his attitude may be good. You have to learn to see the man inside, and not judge people by what they think, what they say, what they do."

This is the ultimate generosity and the truth of Sahaj Marg system. "Judge not, that ye be not judged", said Christ. Why? He did not say. Also, there is an element of a threat in it, that if you judge, you should be prepared to be judged, too. In Sahaj Marg, it is not necessary to judge, because the man, the soul inside, is eternally pure, eternally truth, eternally eternal.

So, when we judge men by their superficial activities we are making a mistake. It is like buying a goods which is beautifully packed, but inside it is all rubbish. Don't be misled by the packing; don't be misled by sales jargon. Look inside, and there is no difference between any of us here. If we learn to look at what is inside, the true person inside, you can find nothing but the Master in any heart. This is the truth.

I remember once, soon after I joined the Sahaj Marg system, and I was in my house, Justice M.L. Chaturvedi from Allahabad came to visit us. We were six or seven people, and he gave us a sitting. At the end of the sitting, my wife asked him, "What did you see?" That man, you know, burst into tears. He had already been an abhyasi and a preceptor for so many years. He burst into tears and said, "What a satsangh here in this house! I saw only seven Babujis and nobody else!" Now, that was not a credit for me and my wife and the others. It was a credit to his vision that he saw the Master where only stupid people like me and my wife were sitting.

I don't see why you should not also develop that vision. Why you are still quarrelling with the outside? Why a Patel remains a Patel? Why a Desai remains a Desai? Why a Rajagopalachari remains a Rajagopalachari? If we would but look into the inside, praying to the Master, "Please grant me this vision which you want us to develop."

There are no crooks, there are no scoundrels, there are no saints. Please remember, Babuji was never addressed as a saint. He was beyond saints. He **made** saints. He was a creator of saints. One does not call God kind or merciful. That is a very narrow way of looking at it. When He does what we want for us, we say, "He is a kind God." When He does not answer our prayers, we say, "He is a blind God." When the child is suffering, we say, "He is a cruel God." When death comes, we say, "He is a cruel God — most cruel of all. He has snatched away my wife or my son or my daughter."

So, these are all subjective ways of looking at God. He is good to you, you are good to Him, then you offer *bhog*, *prasad*. When, in spite of all our prayers, somebody is dead in the house, we say, "What is this God? They say God is love. What nonsense! I prayed so much." I remember Babuji Maharaj said, "A prayer is a prayer. It should not be a demand." Prayer means putting your problems before the Almighty Infinite and letting It decide what should happen to you and what not. Prayers are not automatically acceptable to the Divine, nor answerable to you. The Divine is answerable to no one. Somebody explained that God has no mind, which is one of the facts of Sahaj Marg tradition. Having no mind, He has nothing else. How can He think? How can He do? Therefore, Babuji Maharaj said, "In His infinite mercy, some part of that Divinity which is the Total, which is the Ultimate, which is the Centre, descends in a human form with a heart, with a mind, so that It can respond to us in a human fashion."

So, this is the truth of the system of Sahaj Marg. Look inside. Look inside yourself, too. That is what we are supposed to do in meditation. And if you can look into yourself, too, you will find there the same majestic, glorious divinity seated as your Master, which you must learn to see in others, too. God cannot be for you or for me or for somebody else. He is for everybody. He **is** everybody.

Now, when we have all these differences of opinions and ideas and thoughts amongst us, it only shows that we are still human beings, still looking with a superficially human view, judging with a human-ness that we should have left behind long ago. I am surprised when I am told that this abhyasi has been an abhyasi for twenty years, that fellow for eighteen years, that lady for seventy-six years. I say, "What have you been doing in Sahaj Marg so far?" It is like taking a train from here to Johannesburg, and I have been in the train for seventy-six years and I have not yet reached Johannesburg. Either I am in the wrong train, or the train is not moving at all.

So you see, these things cannot be. It is not a question of the lie and the truth. It is a question of that it just cannot be that a man is in Sahaj Marg for twenty years and is unchanged. I mean, it is a lie to say that. If you say we had the Ultimate as our Master itself, as every one of you is saying, "Babuji Maharaj was Infinite, he was Ultimate, he was the Special Personality," ad nauseam I have been hearing this throughout the world. Then what are you? Where are you? Why are you what you are still?

So, we should not cast infamy upon that old man who, in his innocent love for us, is prepared to do so much for us. I won't say he did anything for us yet. He only showed us himself, part of himself, his superficial, beautiful Self, adorable Self, loveable Self. What more did he show us? What more have you seen which is more to the point? Did you look inside him? Do you know what you say when you say, "Babuji is the Master," or are you just mouthing some truths of which you have not the least understanding? Excuse me, but it is time that each one of you judge yourselves.

He is my Master. But what is 'HE', what is 'IS', what is 'MY', what is 'MASTER'? Every word in those four words must have meaning. HE — whom are you referring to? Do you know him? Did you ever know him? If you did, why did Master have to say, "Many people come to see me, but nobody

sees me." He denies that you have ever seen him. Superficial self, yes; his beautiful smile, yes; his sometimes helpless self, yes; his sick self, yes; happy, sorrowful, yes; but the real Self, according to my Master, none of you have seen. So, when are you going to see it? IS — if he **is**, he could never be **was**. Masters never die, so to say, "Babuji died," is absolute rubbish, is untrue. But at the same time, it doesn't mean he **is** to me today. To me very much so, because he is my Master, as he always has been, as he will ever be.

To him I am grateful, because this problem of acceptance of one and not the other I have been saved, by his mercy. I am the only one who has not been subjected to this problem. For that, I am eternally grateful to him. Yes, it is a grace, because I might have fallen into the same error had there been another representative and I had to go and bow before him. Now, if I cannot bow before another person whom my Master left behind, out of love for my Master, perhaps it is not a big error, because that love will eventually show you the way. But if it is out of other attitudes: "Who is this blighter who is coming here?"

I know a married couple where the boy and the girl knew each other from their ages of three and five, and the girl could never really respect the husband, and he was always thinking of her as a lousy girl with her nose running all the time — past. I asked them, "Why did you marry if this is all the impression that you have of each other, of when you were five and she was three?" He said, "But Sahib, what can I do? That is what is remaining in our heads." I said, "Clean it." They were abhyasis.

So you see, when you dwell in the past, you lose the present. And He who must be in infinity, in eternity, must be in the eternal present. There is no other future for us. It is the eternal present. If you are not in the eternal present with your eternal companion, you are nowhere, not even in the past. He who has not been in the present cannot be in the past, nor can

he be in the future. If Babuji is not, he was not, he never shall be. Those of you who have studied physics have some idea of time, know that existence is both in space and in time, and that space and time cannot be separated. Even the microscopic flash of one millionth of a second has an existence in one millionth of a second; it could not exist in no time. But the real Master exists in no time, beyond time.

I had a vision one morning. Babuji Maharaj and I were sleeping together in his small room inside his *angan*. I woke up at about four o'clock. He was sleeping in such a way that I could have touched him without even extending my hand. I tried to remember his name. I could not remember his name! I was shocked, you see. Four o'clock in the morning, we had been talking together till one o'clock before going to bed, and here he is with me, next to me, closer to me, perhaps I can say even than my wife, and I cannot remember his name! I was really shocked. Then I said, "Well, his Master had the same name, let me remember his name." I could not remember it. I tried for ten minutes, fifteen minutes. I was desperate. I thought something had happened at night which had pushed me into the lowest-most point of hell. What is an abhyasi who cannot remember his Master's name? At that moment Babuji woke up. He said, *"Pesab lagi hai hame."* He wanted to go to the bathroom. So I took him by hand. He was awake; I was awake. He did his job, came back to the washbasin. There was a small mirror. While washing his beard and his face, he looked in the mirror and he saw my faint impression. He said, "Early in the morning, why are you so worried?" *"Tum pareshan ho, kya baat hai."* I was ashamed, but I told him, "Sahib, I cannot remember your name and I tried to remember it through Lalaji, but still I cannot remember your name. Please excuse me, there is some problem which has arisen in the last few hours at night." He hugged me with his wet beard, with his wet hands, and said, "*Mubarak ho!* Congratulations! It has been revealed to you today that the real Master has no name, no form." See, it was a revelation.

Everything comes as revelation. When you think about it with prejudice, or even without prejudice, you shall not know the truth. The truth is denied to thinkers. Temporal truths, physical truths, existential truths — yes. But the higher truths must come only by His grace, by His revelation. Therefore, those who want to know the truth should meditate sincerely, "Please answer, what is this?" Several speakers have told you of their own experiences. Questions are answered only when they are real questions, sincere questions, vital questions. "Does God exist?" You will not receive an answer. It is too foolish a question, too stupid a question, too childish a question. But who is who? Yes!

I remember a letter from a girl in Bangalore. She was puzzled, like everybody else was puzzled and is puzzled, and in her meditation she prayed to Babuji and said, "Babuji, what is this happening? You have left us; I am left alone. What shall I do?" In the meditation she saw Babuji walking with his hand on his hips, you know, you all have seen him like this, and he said, "Look at that chair." There was an empty easy chair. She said, "Yes, I see the empty easy chair." He said, "Look again." And she said she saw Parthasarathi. Then she said, "Yes, but Babuji, he is for the new abhyasis. What about me?" He said, "No new abhyasi, no old abhyasi — only abhyasi!" Then she said, "Yes, what about my question: what about me?" "He is there for you." Then she said, "What about you, Babuji?" He said, "I am also there. You don't discriminate between the two of us." You know the old statement in Christianity, when a woman and a man are married in church, "Those whom God has joined let no man set asunder." I think it is true also of divine marriages between the abhyasi or the disciple and the Master.

I was amused to read subsequently a story about the great Jambawan (Rama's great disciple, Jambawan), Hanuman, and that other fellow, what is his name — Sugriva. They were all great, you see. Jatayu. It is funny, but there is no human being mentioned there — all animals and birds. About

Jambawan there is the story that after Rama Avatar was over and Krishna Avatar came into being, Krishna said, "Let me go and visit my disciples." He looked for Jambawan and found him in the jungle, in his cave. Jambawan was a bear. He was sitting, you know, nodding his head like bears do, and repeating "Ram, Ram, Ram..." Krishna walked into the cave and said, "Jambawan, I have come." Jambawan looked up, saw Krishna and said, "Get out of here, you womanizer!" A fellow with sixteen thousand wives, untold *gopis*. "Get out of my sight!" Krishna said, "But Jambawan, I have come to help you. I consider you as my disciple." He said, "Your disciple! You want to send me to hell? Please leave!" And he put down his head, "Ram, Ram..."

Suddenly he heard the voice, "Look at me now!" It was Lord Rama's voice. He looked up and there was Rama. Chaturbuja, with the *Gandeeva*, whatever it was, not Gandeeva, what was it, Kodanda Rama, and he said, "Look at me, Jambawan!" He fell at his feet and said, "Lord, you have come!" He said, "Look again!" And it was Krishna. So Rama in his Rama form, Krishna in his Krishna form, are the same ultimate spirit coming in different ways. You have a son and you say, "This is my son," just because your blood is running in his veins — that, too, diluted by half the blood of your wife. But it gives you so much joy and happiness.

Legal rights — to this extent, that you will not give a penny of your property to anybody but your son, even if he is the dirtiest scoundrel and womanizer. Isn't it? For half your blood; the other half is your wife's blood. But here, the blood of Divinity itself, the ultimate spirit, runs through the *parampara*.

So you see, these are some truths that we must recognize. "Let not man set asunder those whom God has joined." Let not an outsider say, "This is not your son." If one man should come into your house and say, "Chotubhai, or Chimanbhai, this is not your son," you would probably take up

your shoes. "What the hell do you say? Are you claiming he's a bastard or he's the son of an illicit relationship? He is my son!"

In Christianity you have the tradition when Christ was bathing in the Jordan and praying to God, there was the voice from heaven: "This is my son in whom I am well pleased." That is his prerogative. The son should be judged by the father, not by the neighbours. Fathers are very jealous of their children. If your neighbour should call your child or your daughter a fool, well, you would be up in arms against that neighbour. It would ruin your relationship, perhaps forever. Which of you would like to have your son called a fool or your daughter called a bitch? Not at all. Fathers are very jealous, and the Father in heaven is very jealous of his children.

I remember reading in Lalaji's writings some place, where he tells Babuji Maharaj, "An insult to you I shall consider as an insult to me." Babuji prays, like Christ prayed from his cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Babuji prayed to Lalaji, "Please, they are also your children. They don't know what they are doing. It is their ignorance which speaks. Don't punish them." And Lalaji said, "For your sake, I shall bear all insult. But tell your associates that there is a limit even to my patience." It is documented. It is documented by Babuji; it was supposed to be said by Lalaji. Those who are willing to believe will believe. If somebody said, "Oh, Babuji must have said these things to protect himself," you are at liberty to believe that, too.

After all, which one of us has seen Babuji Maharaj as a Special Personality? What do we know of a Special Personality? What do we know of a Personality? Nothing. We loved Master, we believed everything he said. And, we believed everything he did not say, too. When people asked him, "Who are you?", he said, "I am what I ought to be." He didn't say anything more. When asked, "What are you?", he

said, "I am what my Master has made me." "Are you the Master?" "Well, that is what some of my associates address me." "But Babuji, what can you really do?" one lady asked him. He said, "Because you asked me sincerely, I will tell you. I can spin the universe like a top." One of the rare occasions when he revealed himself verbally.

Then, when one abhyasi asked him, "How to know who is the Special Personality?" he said, "I have given the suggestion in *Efficacy of Raja Yoga* in a footnote. Those who wish to know who the Special Personality is, may sit in meditation with this question in mind." I remember one abhyasi in Madras did it for a period of a week and came running at the end of the week, saying, "But I am only getting Babuji's form when I ask this question." "But!" Because he had decided already it was not Babuji. Now, for his sake Babuji should have produced somebody else.

So you see, to know the truth, don't think! Babuji Maharaj said, "When in doubt, question your heart, refer to your heart." That is what we should be doing. All this repetition of Babuji's quotations, messages: "We are all one connected." Where are we connected? More we are connected by our hatreds, our differences. You know, hatred is also a very potent connection. Those of you who know Romeo and Juliet from Shakespeare, know how hatred connected two families for three or four generations, destroying pairs of lovers one after the other.

So, let not hatred be bred. Let us cherish love. Let us cherish our association as brothers and sisters, knowing that we are, in fact, brothers and sisters. Hatred will grow if you think of it. Don't think of your past. Don't think of also the other person's past. You must be as generous to others as you would be to yourself. If you cannot be generous to somebody, you can never be generous to yourself. And he who cannot be generous to himself can be generous to no one else.

So, a man who continues to hate is a self-hater; he hates himself. This is a psychological truth; it is a spiritual truth. We must have big hearts to forget and forgive. Forget whom? Forget what? Because, if you really look at another person with the inner vision, you see yourself there. You see the Master there, one whom you adore. How can you revile him? How can you punish him? How can you chastise him? How can you excommunicate him from your society? It is not possible.

I remember once I had a quarrel with Babuji Maharaj — official matters, because I was the Secretary for fourteen years as you may know. I was a strict disciplinarian. I still try to be. I was systematic in my work, because I loved my Mission, I loved my Master. And therefore I had differences of opinion with him, because he was always changing his views, his decisions. We had a quarrel. I did not speak to him for three days and he never appeared outside for those three days; he was in bed all the time. Then somebody came to me and said, "You know, this man is not appearing in public. You are the sole reason." I said, "Don't credit me with so much power over my Master." He said, "But you go and see him!"

It was Basant Panchami. So eventually, before leaving for Madras, I went, and there he was on his *charpoy*, you know, two rupees affair, sitting just like that with his face all lost somewhere. I went and sat on the bed, put my hands round his chest and said, "Babuji, I am here." He said, *"Ha, ha, hum dekhte hain."* I said, "Don't think I will ever leave you!" Then he smiled. He said, "*Ye bhi hamen malum hai. Tumse yahi ummid thi.* I expected this from you." Then he told me one thing which he had told me several times earlier, which I had forgotten. He said, "In this world it is easy to find a good Master, but extremely difficult to find a good disciple." I said, "Babuji, one Master is difficult to find. There are billions of us stupid human beings walking around, strutting around, and you say it's difficult to find a disciple."

And then I will tell you something which is not out of self-praise, but I am quoting my Master. He said, "After years of living and working for Lalaji Maharaj, I have found only you so far." Please, I request you not to think of this as self-praise; it is a quotation. Later, of course, the tragedy came and we were in Paris in 1982. He was almost dead. I knew he was dying in any case. I couldn't believe it, because he said he would live till 2006, 2007. I've heard it from him himself.

And yet there he was, every morning, "*Ham janna chahte hain!* I want to go!" I said, "Yes, but we have still three more days in Paris. After that we are surely going home." He said, "*Vahan nahi, vahan!* Not there, but up!" I said, "Babuji, if you talk like this, what about us?" He said, "I have been fooled by everybody. Today, every abhyasi in the Mission thinks he is the President of the Mission. I have been lured by their so-called love into accepting everything they said. I have said yes to everything. I have been compelled to say yes to everything. Today, I find before me the destruction of the Mission facing me. I do not know how to show my face to Lalaji Maharaj."

I mean, it was a most poignant moment. When your guru has to say, "I do not know how to show my face to my guru." "*Mein har ek ke han se han milane laga, sabke murabbatme mein aa gaya. Aaj mein dekhta hun Mission ki barbadi meri samne khadi hai. Aur mein kis halatme aapne chahre ko Lalaji Maharaj ke samne le jaun.*" Can you imagine his anguish? And so many devotees, so-called, so many lovers, so-called. *"Chhee,"* I said to that. I said, "Damn this Mission, damn this Master, damn this Sahaj Marg, if after forty years my Master has to say this about himself." It was not his tragedy; it is our tragedy, you see. Every one of us contributed in our own little way or great way to his destruction, to the destruction of his work, to the destruction of the Mission he had been patiently building up, until finally in frustration, in despair, he left us. He did not die!

As I said, Masters don't die. He just decided that this job was too much for him; there is so much hypocrisy, so much deception, so much selfishness surrounding him, he could not do anything. Then I said, "Babuji, what next?" He said, "You are there. You will make this Mission shine. You will fulfil Lalaji's hopes which I have not been able to fulfil. But remember, bring discipline into the Mission. There must be absolute discipline." I said, "But Babuji, if I start doing discipline where you have not been doing it, everybody would run away." He said, "It doesn't matter if only you are left in the Mission; it is enough for me."

So you see, I am bound under orders of my Master to bring discipline into this Mission. It is not my wish. I would also be like him, sitting, smoking a hookah, gentle, soft, loveable, but I have a job to do. I have to do that which I have been commanded to do, for which I have been trained to do, for which I have been prepared to do, in obedience to my Master's orders. If I do something which displeases you, please remember, I am obeying my Master's orders — who is also your Master. If it is necessary to take the lancet, as Babuji said, and to remove the boil, it has to be done before the arm is so bad that it has to be amputated — *Reality at Dawn*. The wise man cuts the boil instead of waiting to cut off the hand.

I am not threatening anybody. I am not promising anything. I am here to serve. I have not come as your Master; I have come as my Master's disciple. So, I don't want to be called by you as Master; it doesn't bother me what you call. You can call me donkey, it doesn't matter. But, please think of yourself in the true sense, why you are here in Sahaj Marg. Are you here for self-development, to reach a spiritual goal which is promised long ago, or are you here only to bicker among yourselves, create factions, and argue about where we should sit in meditation, and why you should sit in meditation?

I seek your co-operation. I hesitate to say I seek your obedience. It might be too big a word to use under the present

circumstances. But, if you give me your full co-operation, I give you my full service.

Thank you.

5

OBEDIENCE

Klerksdorp, South Africa
15 April, 1991

I am in South Africa because you wanted a message. And I repeat, this is for **your** benefit. For me, one more or less, is one hair off my head. If you don't feed me, my Master feeds me. You are not feeding me. So, if I was not my Master's disciple, would you invite me here? What brings me here? Because I am my Master's disciple you are calling me here, feeding me with so much love, with so much variety.

But you must show love where it really matters: in obedience. As I was saying the other day, obedience can come only in two ways. By being enforced upon, as you have experienced at times. Out of fear you obey. Here, out of love you must obey. Can you disobey your father? No, because you love him. "No, no, Ambubhai, *bewakoof tum, jao.*" That means you go immediately.

So, if we love, we obey. When we love absolutely, we obey absolutely. The test of a man's love is in his obedience. "*Baaki sub.*" Everything else is blah-blah, you see — lies. I don't believe in it. This is my experience. This is my personal way. This is how I achieved what I have achieved, and I recommend it to all of you. Without obedience there is no

love. Then there is only authority, you see. And then you are a slave. Obedience is a reflection of love.

Why does your wife obey everything you say? *"Shadi hogayee."* ["Marriage is done."] She loves you. *"Thik hai buddha hogaya, kabhi kabhi bakwas kar leta hai, sun leti hai ... baad me saheliyon ke saath."* ["All right, he is old, he grumbles a bit, she listens to it, and then goes off to her friends."] But the obedience is there, no? But the police and, you know, this bureaucracy — here, the obedience creates revengefulness, creates opposition, eventually revolution.

When you obey with love there is no revolution, there is no opposite course. Therefore, the love goes deeper and deeper into it. At the absolute stage, as Babuji Maharaj said, "Without His permission I cannot drink a glass of water." You have before you the example of your Master, no? So, why don't you follow it?

There is no use putting up pictures and saying, "In this sofa he sat, and that long he gave me satsangh." We are not here to build monuments. We should, each one of us, be a living monument to the Master. I hope, I mean, you are all capable of it. Except of petty nonsense, you see. So, I don't want these petty differences.

As I told you yesterday, the Mission is mine, in the sense that I am responsible for it. I am at the moment the watchman, and it is my business. Like you have a house, expecting to keep the house clean. In India they leave it dirty, waiting for the next. But we are not Indians, we are not South Africans, so we must keep it clean, always waiting for the *Malik* [the Lord].

It is as if you are expecting the Master at any moment. That is how your heart should be. That is how your Mission should be. That is how every centre in South Africa should be. At any moment, if that old fellow comes, it must be ready for satsangh. Love blossoming in all hearts, united. Then there is something. Otherwise, what is this, like other missions,

Brahma Kumari, building buildings, putting names. So, this is my message, this is my humble request, this is my blessing to you all.

6

BE SIMPLE AND IN TUNE WITH NATURE

Johannesburg, South Africa
16 April, 1991

Good evening. We traditionally speak of yoga as having several elements: the *karma* yoga, the *gyana* yoga, the *bhakti* yoga, about which Franĉois gave you a hint towards the end of his talk. All these things are to be found in what we call the Bhagavad Gita. Most of you must be familiar with it, and in the Gita, Lord Krishna, whom we accept as the Master of the current epoch, the *Kaliyuga*, as we say, says that all of them are difficult for various reasons.

Karma yoga is difficult because you do not know how to perform, what to do, how to do it, when to do it. It is not enough to know what to do, but we have to know when to do it and how much to do. Of gyana yoga he speaks rather disparagingly. He says, "The *gyani*," that is, the wise man, the knowledgeable man, "Will come to me after many, many, many lifetimes." And, he extols the way of *bhakti*. When he is asked by his disciple Arjuna, "Lord, whom do you love best?", he says, "I love my devotees best, because for them the way is easy."

This is one of the features of our Sahaj Marg system, that it seems to blend in its practice the karma aspect, the

bhakti aspect, and the gyana aspect. I often tell our abhyasis, as we call them (people who practise are known as abhyasis; it comes from the Sanskrit word *abhyas* — to practise) what my Master told me, that abhyas by itself does not confer any right to spiritual progress. Here, there is no question of doing and earning one's spiritual uplift. The Hindu tradition is replete with stories of *maharishis*, great *rishis* who meditated for fifteen thousand years, twenty thousand years in past *yugas*, when people had long lives and yet remained unaccomplished, unfulfilled spiritually.

So, the karmic path of it is rather difficult, according to the Gita and according to our own experience, because as Francois explained, in one sense we are born with the impressions of our past thoughts and actions. To take a very ordinary example: if you see somebody run over on the streets and killed, it leaves a strong impression on the mind. People who are susceptible don't sleep for many days; the stronger ones may be able to shrug it off in a few days. So, such impressions in the future create either our hates or our dislikes, or even what we are attracted to.

It is our teaching, my Master's teaching, that as we are born, bringing with us the samskaras of the past, we act only according to those samskaras. It is as if we are motivated by a set of programmes within us. My Master used to explain this is why a good man cannot cease to be good in the conventional sense — you know, a man who goes around giving money to people, clothes to people, lending a helping hand to everybody. Often such people don't know why they are doing it. The good man doesn't often know why he is good. Even more strangely, the bad man doesn't know why he is bad.

It's a well-known fact. Modern jurisprudence, modern systems of incarcerating people in jails, are trying to become more and more aware of this phenomenon, that we do not know why we did such and such a thing which brought us to

such and such a result. Impulsiveness, in a word. Impulsive murders, impulsive loves, impulsive hates, impulsive purchases in shops. We live by the impulse of the moment, and these impulses are created by the samskaras of the past, very much as a toy is wound up and put on the floor, and it does precisely what it has been created to do. In one sense, this Sahaj Marg cleaning system is, in my mind, the most important, because until we remove that, human beings are going to repeat their actions ad nauseum.

I remember reading a book by one of the disciples of Gurdjieff. It is a story about a boy called Ivan, *The Strange Life of Ivan Osokin*, where a boy of twenty-one finds himself in a mess. His father died when he was young, his mother brought him up, and he did all the things which he shouldn't do. He quarrelled with her, left her high and dry, walked out, and suddenly he had a thought that, "If I could live my life all over again, how wonderful it would be. I wouldn't make the same mistakes that I did." At the moment of this thought, he meets an old man who says, "Aha, you think so? It's not so easy to live your life all over again, but if you did have the chance to do it, you would live precisely the way you have done it now." So Ivan says, "Why don't you give me a chance and see?" He says, "There is a wise man living down this lane. You go to him and make this request; he will make it possible."

So he goes to this wise fellow, wise man, who puts something on a brazier of coals, and this boy is back in the cradle. He has a modicum of consciousness of the life from which he has just escaped into this babyhood, but he finds that, as he grows, he is making the same mistakes, doing the same things, quarreling with the same mother, losing the same father, until he is back again on the street in front of the wise man, twenty-one years again, nothing achieved. It is like a gramophone record played again and again which plays the same music. You know you cannot change it. **You cannot change your own life.** This is the point I am trying to make.

I used to be amused when we were children travelling in our trains in India. Some of the children are impatient. When the train stopped, they would go to the wall of the train from inside and push it. Now anybody knows, you cannot push a car from inside, you cannot push a train from inside. You cannot even push yourself from inside. Two reasons: one is the samskara which is your programme by which you are going to live, unless an external influence changes your life and makes a new programme for you. This is what Gurdjieff and Ouspensky call the external influence. It is like a wheel. If you want to stop it, an external force has to be applied. It is like the laws of science. A body in motion continues to be in motion until it is opposed and stopped. A body in rest continues to be in rest.

It is amazing how these spiritual laws and these scientific laws run parallel. People in science pooh-pooh spirituality and say, "Oh, irrational nonsense!" And people in spirituality say, "Oh, materialistic stupidity." But my Master discovered that there is a parallelism in nature, in which the laws which apply to one aspect of your life are precisely and exactly the same as the laws which apply to the other aspect of your life.

For instance, the idea of a bird flying with two wings: no bird can fly with one wing. I mean, this is one of the things we see from childhood. Also, when you are flying at an angle, you tilt one wing. It is as if this wing is weighted and this wing is elevated, and you go around in circles. If this wing is tilted, you are going round in the opposite circle. What is the need for balance? That these two wings must be precisely balanced, and then you have a level flight in a straight line going to a particular direction.

This is the need that my Master emphasized again and again, to balance our spiritual and our material lives. Sahaj Marg has no quarrels with the material existence, unlike the rishis of the past or the sages of the past. We don't say, "Run

away from your wife, live a celibate life, sell all thou hast and follow me." We say no. Because when you lead such a life, your thoughts are in the opposite direction.

In fact, my Master once explained, you know, I had a experience to discuss with him, and that was about one abhyasi who in meditation had a block, which my Master had to cut, a block from the past. And it was this, that in her past existence she had been a very pious and serious yogic practicant, and in her endeavour to reach the highest possible levels of spirituality, she had abandoned four children on the banks of a river and run away; and when she ran away the wailing of the children made such a profound impression on that existence, that it was coming into this existence and blocking her progress.

So you see, nobody can run away successfully from anything. Running away is an act of cowardice. We have to stand and face. But to what extent? Because, often we find that there are things which we cannot face. They are too horrible to face, depending on how we have lived in the past, how we are living in the present.

So, this idea of external assistance of a superior person, not in the sense of being more educated or more physically powerful or richer or anything; he may be the humblest person on earth. Jesus Christ is an example. Buddha is an example. They had nothing by which worldly standards could be judged as something profound, yet people flocked to them from all over the world. The religions that they created continue to exist even today.

It is a sad fact that their teachings became hardened into religious systems. I don't think when Christ started teaching he ever thought he was going to give a religion to the world called Christianity. But it is like water vapour falling; it becomes rain, and if it is cold enough, it comes down as snow, ice. So, when things descend, they lose their original simplicity, their original veracity, their original subtlety, their

all-pervasiveness, and become solidified into what we can call petrified forms of worship. No religion depends on worship. We depend on love, or bhakti, as we call it. That is by the way.

The original propagator or the creator of a religion, whether he knew about it or not, gave us only a system, a system by which to live by, a system of ideals by which to live by, and a code of ethics, practices by which to live by. And it is not a very strange fact that all these great proponents of the truths of the past, tradition says, all meditated. Christ meditated, Buddha meditated, Mohammed meditated, and so many unnamed saints who did not create religions in their names also meditated. In the Indian tradition, literally you cannot count the number of people who have meditated and risen to the highest goals. But they made one mistake, in our opinion: they left their family, they forgot society, they ran away to the jungles.

Often people ask today, "What did they do for society? What did they do for the world?" I think it is a legitimate question, because one Christ, one Buddha, is not enough for us. My Master said, "What is the use of admiring a Christ, bowing before him, lighting candles before his altar?" Or worshipping a Buddha, reciting day after day, *"Om mani padme hum,"* lighting incense in his altar? What is the use when we, every one of us, should have become Christs, Buddhas, Mohammed *sahebs*! So, the duty of such persons, the great saints, is to create others like themselves, not one. If possible, every individual in the human scene should become such!

I don't think any religion says, "There shall be only one and no more." "You have to become like me;" that is what the saint says. The father wants his son to become like him. The mother wants her daughter to become like him. The divine saint wants his children to become like him. Saints in what sense? Not physically, not in other ways, but in the essence, in

the glory of the spirit that lies hidden within them which has to be exposed. Francôis said very correctly that, as the cloud hides the sun from us with a very thin layer of water vapour, it creates havoc, it can put us in darkness. But if you rise above it...

I'll tell you a very amusing incident. I was once to travel from Madras to Bombay by air. It was an awfully rainy day. The clouds were about forty thousand feet thick and everybody was cancelling their flight. But I had to go urgently, so with a prayer in my heart I boarded the flight. And it was very amusing, you know, it was a revelation to me that as we pierced the cloud layer and went up, what was dark and forbidding from below, was all beautiful burnished silver from above. It was just a question of whether I see it from below or whether I saw it from above. Our problems are like that. When we are subdued by them they appear enormous, black, miserable, forbidding. You rise above your problems, they are actually mirrors of yourself.

So you see, how to rise? Now, I had a plane to raise me, but that was in the physical realm. How to rise above these mundane things? Good or bad, it doesn't matter, because spirituality says, "Good and bad are like the two ends of a stick. Turn it around, the good can become bad, the bad can become good." You have to rise above both to a realm of existence where there is no good, where there is no bad, where there is only reality.

My Master often used to say, "You cannot say God is kind." Because if he was kind, he could be cruel. If he was nice, he could be un-nice. If he was wise, he could be stupid. We are in the world of opposites where these things prevail. But for Him there can be no wisdom, there can be no un-wisdom. He cannot be tall, he cannot be short. He cannot be big, he cannot be small.

In fact, that is why spiritual science speaks of Him as Nothingness, the zero principle. Essentially, Hinduism and our

Sahaj Marg yoga says: God is of the essence of Nothingness. Not that He is nothing, but He has partaken of the total essence of Nothingness. But, like a vacuum from which everything comes, being powerless, all power comes from Him. No wisdom, but all wisdom flows from Him. In fact, everything that you see in manifest form in this universe is out of His infinite, yet nothingness Self.

So, when we seek God and we say, "He is a nice fellow, he is kind-hearted, he is compassionate, he is merciful," I think it depends on what we are. If I am a criminal and I need mercy, I look upon God as merciful. If I need compassion, I look upon God as compassionate. If I am afraid of punishment, I am afraid of God the punisher. So, we create a God according to our need of the moment. When He answers all our prayers, well, "He is a jolly good fellow, you cannot have a better God than the God that I have." When nothing goes according to my prayers, nothing is answered, the child for whom I am praying is dead, the job which I desperately need to keep has gone, then I say, "Where is this God? He must be blind! Where is this unkind God?"

I see this question asked ad nauseum, especially in the West: "Chari, how can you talk of a God when you see millions of people starving in Ethiopia, when you see AIDS going round the world like this, when you see poverty becoming rampant, violence, armament sales, apartheid?" Yes, but God did not create these things. If God did, we could pray to him to remove it. We created these things. We create gold and we set a value on it and it becomes valuable. We create diamonds. As somebody was saying this morning, when we were going out a bit shopping, a bit of stone and it creates murderers, it creates rapacity, it creates avarice-ness, beyond all human expectation. A bit of stone!

So you see, we have to lay the right value upon what we live by. What Christ said: "Man shall not live by bread alone!" Then what is it that we have to live by? That is where spiritual

practice comes. It says, "Well, you have to live, live simply! Don't magnify your desires, your needs, your wants, beyond your capacity to bring them into your field." Every new want — you want more money, isn't it? This year I have a Morris 8, next year I want a Mercedes Benz, next year I would like, I don't know, a Rolls Royce. I have a two-room flat, I need a four-room bedroom, and then I need a mansion with two and a half acres of nice lawn around it.

Spirituality says, "Be simple. Live your life simply." A simple life does not need much by which to sustain it. If, in this one simple way, we can cut our wants, then we slip back to our needs. Now, needs are common for all of us: white or black, yellow or orange, tall or short, man or woman. The needs are the same: food, drink, air to breathe, place to sleep in, some modicum of work by which to garner the resources by which we can provide ourselves with these things. What my Master said was, "You don't have to be rich to be happy." And it is an unfortunate fact that most people know, and most rich people should accept this if they speak from their hearts, that the richer they get, the less security they have, the more trouble they feel. Therefore, they have to hide themselves behind high walls with the electrified fences, watchmen, dogs, etc. I mean, they spend half their fortune in guarding the other half of their fortune!

It is not a joke; it is a miserable thing. They cannot walk on the streets. They are afraid of being mugged. They have their diamond rings and whatnot in the safes in the banks because they cannot afford to wear them. Now, my Master said, "What is the use of these things if you cannot even wear them?" Why do you keep them in your bank? Why do you anguish over them? Why do you have sleepless nights?"

What is true of possessions is true of power. What was it, that old saying about the head that wears the crown not being able to sleep. No powerful man sleeps. I mean, you just have to imagine Saddam Hussein's present plight, or that poor

novelist who has been put under the *fatwa* of death by Ayatollah Khommeni. How could they sleep? It is as if the hounds are let out after you.

So, my Master said, "Needs, you have a right to look for." You want food. Yes, but you can't have caviar and champagne. He said, "Reduce your wants to the basic needs of existence and they are provided." The air you want, you don't have to pay for it. The water you drink, nobody has to pay for it. The sunlight is free. The beauty of the mountains and the gardens is free. So much of food, anybody can easily create for himself. Now, I often heard the criticism in the West, "Well, if we all lived like that, what would happen to industry, what would happen to industrial progress, what would happen to industrial growth?" Well, that is for the industrialists to worry about. It's not our problem. Isn't it?

It is like saying, "If I didn't go on the train, what would happen to the railways?" I don't think of the railways when I travel; I travel when I must. And, if the train didn't exist, I would take a horse and ride, probably, or walk. People did walk not very long ago, and they were the healthier for it, stronger for it, more in touch with Nature, which is our foundation, the foundation of our existence. As my Master used to say, "Be simple and in tune with Nature." Now we hide ourselves in air-conditioned halls, curtains. I used to be amused when I was in London for many years, when I was a boy of twenty. They used to say, "There are only four sunny days in England." The moment the sun shone, they would come out, stick their hands in their waist-coats, and say, "By Jove, wonderful weather, isn't it?", close the doors, draw the curtains, and go inside! I mean, this is an experience I am saying. We don't want natural things. We want heaters, we want fireplaces — marble, preferably.

So, if you are able to go back in tune with Nature, first comes the adjustment with Nature. However extreme the climate, people have survived in the past, otherwise we

wouldn't be here talking about them today. We have the old Celts, the Nordics, the Vikings. They lived as Nature made them to live. They were strong, they were courageous, they were bold, they were adventuresome, and this world was discovered by most of them. We didn't discover it; we are only enjoying the fruits of their discovery. They discovered. Intrepid fellows who went round on the seas.

Now, we are only recreating a reed boat which some fellow rafted across the Atlantic. We want to make another reed boat and prove that it was done. And everybody praises, there are TV cameras going above him, videos, a plane to watch over him. The original fellow didn't have a plane watching over him, no records on TV, but he made it, and we are only duplicating it.

So you see, we are duplicating lives. Where is the originality in our existence? One man digs a gold mine, another man buys a gold mine, he is making a third gold mine, and we are all comparing our production statistics, sales statistics: how much in reserve, how much should we hold back so that the prices don't fall. And they have the very nice names of Gold Producers Association, Diamond Producers Association, and this morning I was surprised, shocked, when somebody told me that the sanctions have been lifted against South Africa by the EEC, and there is a hope that gold prices will rise. I said, "My friend, if I am to buy gold, I would rather pray that they fall!" Isn't it?

Now, consumer prices are rising. Which one of you would like prices to rise? We would all like prices to fall. What makes these prices rise and fall? It is human stupidity, humans holding back resources from others. But when we reduce our needs to the minimum, we don't want any more, we don't have to be stupid. Stupidity doesn't need any more to govern my life. I can afford to be generous, charitable, merciful.

There was a fellow called William Blake, one of the few mystics I've heard about in England. He has written a very profound truth, that in winter if there is a small slice of bread thrown out of the window, all the sparrows will sit around it, eating amicably. In summer, when there is plenty, you throw a loaf of bread, one sparrow will sit on it, eat it, and peck at all the other birds, keeping them away. This is a fact of life. Prosperity — we tend to keep others away.

It has been in times of greatest miseries and disasters that people have come together. World War II — this phenomenon was absolutely there for anybody to see in England. Every air-raid warning and the people went together, now big and small, high and low; it didn't matter if whether a noble or a beggar.

So, this is the truth of spirituality: that prosperity creates dissension, makes us selfish. The more we have, the more we want. As my Master put it very nicely, "A poor man wants money, the moneyed man wants more money, the more moneyed man wants to be rich, the rich wants to become richer, and the richer wants to be the richest." I don't know what you get by being the richest man in town. Is it not enough that we have enough? Why should we have more? "Enough for to the day is the evil thereof," they said, but I say, "Evil enough for to the day is the good thereof."

How much of pleasure can we enjoy in a day? How much can you take in? How much can you accept? Is there not an overload factor also for pleasure as there is for pain? Pain, Nature takes care of. There is a pain threshold beyond which you lose consciousness. But you don't see it happening where pleasure is concerned; you only get drunk and roll around on the streets.

So you see, spirituality says, "Avoid!" There is no such thing as pleasure. It is a titillation of the senses; one way or the other, it doesn't matter which. Pain makes us sympathetic, makes us compassionate. One who has not suffered pain can

never be sympathetic or compassionate. He says, "What pain? Which pain?" You say, "Headache." He says, "I don't know what is a headache; I never suffered one."

So you see, spirituality has always focused upon the need for pain. It doesn't mean you go around starving yourself or lashing yourself, like some of the people in the Middle Ages did. It only means accept pain for what it is, as something which opens your eyes to reality. More importantly, as something which opens your **heart** to reality.

You all know, perhaps, the story of the Buddha. He was born a prince, married a princess, had his baby, and one morning he did the forbidden thing: went out. His coachman took him, and on the way he saw a sick man, very sick, an old man, unable to walk, a beggar, and a corpse being carried for cremation. And that was his enlightenment. He said, "What is this life? To be old like this, to be sick like this, to be carried on the shoulders of four men, good and true?" And he said, "Enough!" That was the moment of his awakening. His realisation came later, his final realisation came later, the *nirvana* and the *mahanirvana*, but it was a moment of awakening.

But, we are seeing people dying on the streets when we couldn't care less, because we have never suffered. That is why great saints have taken the trouble to go down into the depths of life and live as other people live. Live in poverty, live in misery, live in hovels, live in the slime and gutters of humanity. If you want to know what a cobbler feels, you must become a cobbler. Isn't it? If any woman wants to know what a prostitute feels when she is selling herself, she must become a prostitute. It's all easy, you know, to laugh and make jokes about these fallen sisters of our society. Swami Vivekananda said, "Do not look down upon these fallen sisters of ours, for if they would not be there, you and you and you would be prostitutes in their place."

So you see, this sort of generosity, this sort of charitable outlook on humanity, whatever they are, they are my sisters and brothers, you cannot have except through suffering. Pleasure, enjoyment, isolates you from the rest of humanity. Riches isolate you. Possessions isolate you. Power absolutely isolates you. And remember, that with all the great saints of the past, the final temptation was always the temptation to power. "I shall grant thee dominion over this earth." That was Christ's temptation. Buddha's was the same temptation and, if at that moment said, "Aha, from a mere village idiot, now He is offering me the whole world, dominion over the whole world, and children and grandchildren and their grandchildren for me to see!", he would have collapsed on the spot, his life a waste, back in the gutter of humanity like the rest of us.

So, spirituality says: shun possessions, shun power. In these lie all the traps of the world in which you are living. They are traps which don't catch you, but into which you walk yourself, being tempted by them. Beware! Look this way. When we see a mouse in a trap, you can see how foolish it is, it has certainly to do one or two things and it could be out.

We were watching — we had been to the zoo, I think yesterday afternoon, and there are places where the lion could easily jump across the water, but it has no motive force, no motivation, no impetus. We are like that lion. Surrounded by our moats, on our tiny island kingdoms, with a tiny hole to hide in which we pretend to be our cave, roaring away for all the world to see, to prove that I am still a lion. And, we know what lies we are living, and whom we are cheating. We are cheating ourselves!

So you see, Sahaj Marg is very simple. It says, balance your material life and your spiritual life. With only one of them, you cannot exist. In this it differs from all the ancient traditions. Most of the ancient traditions talk of renunciation, renouncing the worldly life, running away. But my Master says no. It is better that you are in the home and you bring the

jungle into it, than you are in the jungle and you take your home with you there. Those whom we have loved, we cannot depart from so easily. But it is easy to go about your job, concentrating upon your inside, upon your inner self, meditating tranquilly, undisturbed by the family which is doing its thing around you all the time.

So, Sahaj Marg is the way of the householder. We have no truck with *sannyasa*, we too have no truck with celibacy. I said, "Why celibacy?" Why not, because all the ancient traditions talk of the need for celibacy, the need to refine the *ojas shakti* and things like that, penetrating into the thousand-petal lotus. My Master said, "God is not a fool to create two sexes if it was unnecessary." It is a very simple answer. But that life must be, shall we say, not commanded, but regulated, regulated by the principles of a good and holy life. It is foolish to think that sex is dirty or that it is pleasant or that it is anything else. It should be, above all, a holy act of creation.

So you see, the teaching of Sahaj Marg only puts things back in their perspective. Eat? Yes. Eat what is necessary, eat wisely, eat of the simplest. No stomach problems, no diseases, no ulcers. Don't starve, don't fast — the middle path of Buddha. In our meditation, we sit. Meditation means to think continuously about something, constantly about something. It leads to concentration. Meditation leads to concentration, which is the end result of the meditative process. My Master said, "Concentration is the instrument for revelation." He also added, "God cannot be the object of revelation." No knowledge on earth can reveal Him to you. He can reveal Himself to you at His wish, under His will and pleasure. But you cannot penetrate into that sacredness, that holiness, that *sanctum sanctorum* from which only He can emerge to show Himself to us.

Then what is all this blah-blah about meditation? Well, it is a discipline. As Franĉois said, we need knowledge, we need discipline, we need regulated minds, because after all,

the mind is like the radar for a ship or the rudder of a ship, without which we can go astray all over again. As my Master said, "The mind is the problem; the mind is also the solution." Without the mind, we would be nowhere. We would be plants and animals.

Then we come to this idea of *bhakti*, that, as my inner meditation grows and as my mind becomes one-pointed, as I become more and more capable of concentration, I see that this is not the way. At the same time, our meditation focuses itself on the heart, on the Divine light in the heart. It is supposed to generate in you a love for that which you see in yourself. This is not some external God whom we shall worship, or of whom we shall be afraid, and before whom we shall bow, but it is my Self — my higher Self with a capital 'S', and I see that it is my Self. Not myself, but my Self. Of whom then should I be afraid, to whom should I beg, from whom should I run away? I cannot positively, possibly run away from myself.

So, it brings together that which is in me with this external me, the egoistic me, the bodily me, until one day there is a grand blending of the two, and you say, "He is me. I am nothing without Him. He is the Master, He is the Controller, He is the man who makes me move, laugh, sleep, everything else. Under His instructions now I must live my life." This is what we call surrender. And, surrender not to an enemy, or to a friend or to a lover, or to someone we hate, but surrender to the Self. There should be no odium about this surrender, no lack of self-respect, no lack of the ego, no weakening of the ego. After all, I'm surrendering only to my Self. So, what should I be afraid of? What should I be ashamed of? At that stage my inner Self takes over, and from then on this system, the bodily system becomes an instrument in its hands. That is the culmination of spiritual practise. There must be something beyond that. Well, yes.

It is like a novel. Every novel has an ending, but some of the good ones we wish would not end. We can write another novel by ourselves, you see.

So, it is to this adventure that we invite you. We have centres in many parts of South Africa. These are two gentleman who are running the Mission at the moment, there are preceptors, and I invite you to browse through these books. If you are interested in meeting us and asking questions, we are out in 190 Rose Avenue, Lenasia, which is about forty-five minutes drive from here, the Indian settlement. All of you are welcome. We would like to meet you, discuss with you and, if you wish, induct you into this system.

Thank you.

(Public talk given at Witwatersrand University.)

7

He is Within

Lenasia, South Africa
19 April, 1991

There has been some talk about nothingness. I would start off by telling you an experience I had at the age of five when my mother passed away. One moment she was there, the next moment she was gone. And of course, being a child comparatively (in India we are still children at the age of five), I must have asked so many people what happened. Because, to our senses, to our perception, nothing has gone, but yet everything has gone. And I found, to my dismay and to my surprise, to my consternation, that no one could explain this. They were all weeping, they were very sad, a lot of mourners, you know, because my mother was very young; she must have been about twenty-three, twenty-four. But what puzzled me was: here is such a great transition from life to death, when apparently nothing has gone, everything is still there, and yet nothing is there.

I think it took me about thirty years of subsequent — I can't call it a search; that is too big a word for it — but reading through some books here and there. I had no knowledge of Sanskrit, so I could not go to the source. But I learned from translations, and especially one Upanishad, the

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, which speaks most beautifully about this, using as an analogy not a dead person or a corpse or a living body, but the seed of a fruit. A disciple wants to know what is God, what is it that permeates this universe, gives it life, the withdrawal of which seems to create death. What is it that one moment shines and that the next moment fades away into darkness? What is it that creates the transition from joy to sorrow, to despair? The guru tells the young boy, "Go and bring me a fruit from that tree." The boy dutifully brings a fruit. The guru says, "Cut it." The boy cuts it into two. The guru asks, "What do you see?" He says, "A lot of pulp and some seeds within." The guru says, "Just take out a seed." The boy takes out a seed. "Cut it." He cuts it. "So, what do you see?" The boys says, "Nothing." The guru says, "It is from that nothing that this big tree has come."

Similarly, life partakes of the essence of nothingness. We do not know how a child is born. It is too facile to say that a man and a woman come together, and there is something called conception. Cellular biology brought into the picture that there is fertilization etc., but nobody can see a cell. Why it is fertilized, nobody knows. Why often the cell is not fertilized, nobody knows, because there are women who cannot have children and who ask this question, "Why is it so difficult for me to have a child? What is this mystery that makes all the other women in the world have children? They are happy, they are mothers, but the fundamental purpose of womanhood is denied to me. I have the same ovaries; presumably I have the same seeds within me. But why is it not happening?" This is a mystery.

Why life is created? Why life is uncreated? I wouldn't say it is destroyed, because life is never destroyed. Why is it uncreated? It is like asking, "Why is a spiral round or a circle round?" or, "Why is a watch wound up?" I have often said — this is one of my personal joys, my own special discovery, you may say; it is not a discovery that earns a Nobel Prize, but it is my own wonderful conception which gave me a moment of

wonder, a moment of joy — that a clock runs not by winding it up, but by the unwinding of the spring. It is not difficult to comprehend; everybody knows it. You would even say, "What is this fellow talking about? It is such a stupid thing!" Everybody knows, yes. But until you find it out you don't know it.

Similarly, I believe, Sahaj Marg believes that it is in the unwinding of life that evolution really takes place. My Master put this differently. He said, "When you remove everything, what is left is God." Not our clothes, because then we are only naked bodies. Remove the body, what else is left? Or, as in the case of the tree and the fruit and the seed — what was left when the seed was cut open? You see, you cannot cut open what is a whole entity and have two parts which continue to be whole.

I was amused once to read somewhere in the Gurdjieff literature that you can never see the centre of a thing. You cut a ball into two to find the centre, but the centre has vanished, because now you have two halves which are two wholes really, and each one has a centre. You cut the two halves into two — again you don't see the centre, because there are now four quarters, each of which has its own centre.

So you see, the centre is not as easy to see as we think it is, just because on plain dimensions we see the centre of a circle. This is the first lesson that geometry should teach us: that we, from a third dimension of perception, can see the centre of a circle precisely because that is two-dimensional. This should be a pointer to the fact that, if I am to see the centre of my existence, I should rise above my three-dimensional existence and go to something called a fourth dimension, fifth, sixth — whatever it may be. I believe spiritual practise does precisely this. It rises, or raises us, beyond ourselves, out of ourselves, in a sense, or, if you would prefer, it puts us within ourselves, and in some way makes us transcend this mundane three-dimensional existence, material

existence, daily existence, to something transcending it, where we can perhaps achieve a perception of that truth which my Master used to call the Centre.

In Sahaj Marg terminology we have no idea of God. It is not necessary. God is a human idea. Many great philosophers have said that if there is no devotee, there is no God. One German philosopher has gone to the extent of saying that when a tree, a giant oak, falls in the jungle, there is no noise unless there is a human ear to hear it. Otherwise, there are only vibrations in the air. Light is only vibration, sound is only vibration. So, what is sound, what is light, what is form? These are subjective creations of the human mind, because we are endowed with certain perceptive capacities, perceptions which translate Reality into something we can perceive, handle, commune with, live with, and grow out of eventually. Now, this "growing out of" escapes us.

Unfortunately, when we succumb to this world of sensory perception — it may be pleasure, it may be pain, it is not germane to the issue — we believe that this is the world that is real. What I touch is real, what I smell is real, what I see is real, what I taste is real. That which I cannot touch or see or taste or smell or feel, doesn't exist for me. If you ask such persons the question, "What about the wind that you feel blowing on your cheeks?", they say, "Yes, but it is the wind." But that is only a name. What is the wind? "Oh, it is air." "Okay, wonderful. But what is air?" We are caught in a *cul de sac* in the immediate moment when we try to get out of the five senses, and we cannot explain anything.

For me there was a moment of divine inspiration, truly divine inspiration, thanks to my Master's grace. We used to wonder why in meditation — at least it was my experience, when I was in profound meditation — there was no light, there was only utter absolute darkness. Utter absolute darkness! I was puzzled, because all the traditional yogic literature, meditational literature, speaks of the divine presence as being

equivalent to millions of suns shining together. "*Koti surya sama prabha,*" says the Veda. One *koti* is a *crore*, which is ten million — ten million suns, if they are shining together, what would be the brilliance of that effulgence? That is the Divine Presence, says the Veda. But it was not my experience.

When I asked my Master, he said, "Well, you are intelligent, you are educated, think over it!" But no amount of thought could reveal to me why I saw this as darkness. But one day, I was sitting on my lawn, looking up at the sky. I happen to be fond of watching the stars and the planets. A pinpoint of light went across from the horizon to, say, the height of the skies and then disappeared. I could know it was a satellite. An orbital satellite, very speedy, very fast. Then this revelation came that there is light, but I only see darkness and, but for that object which was transiting the sky reflecting that light, there would still be only darkness.

So you see, often, as my Master, Babuji Maharaj used to say, things can be the exact opposite of what we see. This we see in our daily experience, but we are too foolish to understand their import. We see pleasure as pain, we confuse ourselves, justify ourselves by saying that pleasure turned into pain. But suppose you could bring the turning into an instant of time, it is pleasure is pain.

My Master used to say, "When you have a headache," (because I often have a headache), "and it is relieved, what a pleasure you feel." Is there more pleasure in pleasure experienced as pleasure or is there more pleasure as a result of relief of pain? Anybody can answer this question. We would rather have the supreme pleasure of relief from troubles, from sorrows, from miseries, rather than the transitory, transient pleasure of pleasure itself.

As they say in the New Testament, "Dust and ashes in our mouth." Pleasure is nothing but that. There and gone. Fleeting. The most potent pleasure, the pleasure of sex — excuse me for mentioning it, but it is a very germane thing to

our discussion — is potent precisely because it involves all the five senses. Everything involves one or two senses. Eating involves taste, smell. Flowers, they appeal to our vision; if they have a perfume, you like it. But in the sex act it is the coming together of the five sensory impulses. Therefore, it is strong. Therefore, it is stronger than anything else. Therefore, often we cannot even overcome its pull. Why was this so created? Precisely because it was to fulfil the powers of nature's purpose, that there shall be procreation.

Some people would argue, "Yes, but then are you not denying the purpose of nature if you practise celibacy?" I asked this question of my Master myself. He said, "That is nature's problem, not yours. It has its own way of propagating itself. Your purpose is to evolve, not to fulfil the purposes of nature by propagating yourself. You forget that."

So, evolution means growing out of the pull of the sensory world. It may be fascinating — it generally is. But then, fascination is fascination: there for the moment and gone the next. So, how to come out of this world of the five senses which, in a sense, we are unable to overcome, in another sense which are sins severely limiting our perception of the truth and the reality?

I would like to tell you a small story in this connection. Again, perhaps the women may not like it, but it involved a couple who were at the point of divorce. They had problems — what you call "marital problems," politely, which the West would blatantly say sexual problems, maladjustments. So many things, mental, physical, etc. They came and started meditation very grudgingly. Somebody said, "How on earth can meditation help sex?" My Master would not discuss it because, you know, he was too sensitive and old-worldly a gentleman, brought up in the strictest traditions of India, where even the mention of the word sex was taboo. But he told me, "You are familiar with the West; you talk to these people." I said, "How and what?" He said, "You know." He

was too shy to even mention it to me. "You know what to speak."

So, I had to convince them that sex is essentially in the mind, of the mind, and the pleasure, too, is in the mind, though the act may be physical. To some extent they were able to grudgingly accept. But later on, after six months — this was related to me by my Master, Babuji Maharaj — after six months the woman came back very shyly to Babuji and said, "Please, Babuji, you do something. I am in deep trouble." You can understand what it was, you see. The amorous spirit had been awakened too avidly, perhaps, by my Master, and now there was a problem, that from this extreme it had moved to that extreme. Why I am saying this is not because sex is so important, or we need to discuss it here, but that by yogic techniques sex can be stopped, sex can be created, sex can be made destructive, sex can be made constructive, sex can be nullified.

What is the proof? Well, you have the amoeba, which divides. You have things like leeches, which are hermaphrodites, and which have contained within themselves both the sexes, and yet two of them mate. You have bisexual, you have unisexual, you have nonsexual things. So, nature has produced a vast panorama of living forms, and we are but one. And, to think that sex is necessary even for procreation is a misunderstanding. I am not suggesting that all the old fables are true — of saints having been born from trees, Sita having come up from the fields of the earth, somebody having dropped from the sky, the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary.

What is their actual, factual truth? That question is stupid, because where we are going beyond the facts of nature, beyond facts of existence, the word 'factual' is misapplied. If I can find happiness in sorrow, it doesn't mean I am a misfit or a stupid fellow or a case for psychologists. It only means I can find happiness where you cannot find it! If I, being blind, can

find a black cat in a dark room, why not? You cannot say it's impossible. If, perchance, we can create more children without a wife by other means than the regular, recognized, physical means, why not? After all, human beings in their evolution, temporal evolution, even scientific, technological evolution have proved that they can do so many things which you would not have dreamt of thirty years back, fifteen years back, even ten years back.

'Atom' is a word which means indivisible. And yet, we have broken the atom. That which was indivisible, that which was supposed to be the fundamental brick of creation, has been broken down into two half bricks or one nucleus and many electrons going around it. Nucleus — now that is the brick. But then somebody said, "That can be divided, too." And you have this whole family of, you know, quarks and narks and protons and neutrons and leptons and I don't know what else.

Now, nature cannot be divided to let you find out its secret. It is like cutting a fruit open to find the centre and you find the centre has disappeared. You cut open a seed to find out where the life of that seed is which is going to grow into a magnificent tree — you cannot find it. That which cannot be found by cutting open things is God.

Now, science cuts open things. If you accept analysis as dissection, mental dissection, medical science, vivisection: forms cut into two to reveal the sub-forms, the sub-sub-forms. Science goes by the way of cutting and cutting and cutting and cutting into analytical sub-systems, until you wind up, as they say, with something you never thought existed. And then you start all over again. It is funny how many of these reactors we are building — I don't know what they call them — cyclotrons, to break up particles — enormous things, enormously expensive, which cover areas of I-don't-know-how-many square miles now, to catch the tiniest particle that you have yet got. You need one hundred square miles of I

don't know what they call it. Powerful magnetic forces beyond conception, and energy beyond any assumption that you can make. They say that in the laboratory, sometimes you use the energy of the sun itself, at temperatures of the sun itself. What have we achieved?

Philosophy, spirituality. Philosophy in the Indian sense, as a way of life, not as a subject to be studied in schools and colleges. Spirituality as a practical method of approaching the Unknowable (not the unknown). The Unknowable says, "Reverse this, instead of going outwards."

You know, it is one of the fundamental posits of science that you can never know how big the universe is because it is expanding at a rate faster than you can imagine. Everything is moving away from everything else, and at the outer reaches of the universe perhaps it is going even at the speed of light or even beyond. Nobody knows. When we don't know how big this world in which we are living is, when we think of the world as the universe, what are we going to ever know? So, spirituality says, even that can be known not in the conventional sense through the senses, but through a flash of understanding: the transient intellectual, sensual appreciation of things as a monumental moment of infinite experience.

It is like what my Master said to me when I first met him. "How to know?" He said, "Test it." I said, "Test?" He said, "Taste." I said, "What?" He said, "If you want to buy a mango, all the books on mangoes that you may read will not tell you what is that mango worth. Cut off a slice, eat it — you know instantly what a mango tastes like." What is an avocado I didn't know until I went to France. I never had eaten it; it's too expensive. They gave me a bit of it. I said, "Aha, this is avocado." They said, "Yes." Now I can never forget it because it is impressed in my experience.

So, experience is the true garnerer of knowledge. If you just think of how our books of knowledge are filled with knowledge, you have only to think back to the man who did

the research, or the woman who did the research. They researched, accumulated a body of knowledge, which we study. And now we are foolish enough to think that we have to study to acquire knowledge.

Nobody on earth ever got knowledge from books — certainly not the originator of that knowledge. Einstein discovered relativity, sitting in his office — a patent office, of all things. He was a misfit in school. He received bad reports. Yet he is today acclaimed as the greatest scientist of this century. It was the mind which produced the results. Later on, scientists confirmed that by experiment.

This is the way we follow in our schools. Boyle's theory, Lemarck's theory — whatever it is, I don't remember the names. We repeat those experiments, reconfirm the findings of those original experimenters in our experience and confirm the knowledge, and establish it within ourselves. Now it is my knowledge. It is no longer his alone; it is mine, too.

This is the way of spirituality. Spirituality says all these things were unknown even to scientists. Though scientists today claim that only they have knowledge, all the rest is blah-blah. All the rest is sentiment, emotion, psychic. You know, they dismiss it with a shrug of the shoulders. But what is not psychic about sitting in a patent office and discovering the theory of relativity? To me, it is a psychic phenomenon. He didn't do it in a laboratory, with a pair of forceps and tubes and things. He did it in his office.

Madame Curie — she didn't discover radium; radium exposed itself to her. There was a photographic plate in a drawer of the table with a key or something on top of it, and she put a bit of rock with which she was experimenting on it, and next morning when she came, took out the photographic plate (it had been exposed) — there was the image of the key. Now, we would have normally said, "Oh, there must have been some exposure. Somebody is responsible. Somebody's failure." But her mind went beyond, and she deduced that this

rock must be responsible for it. There must be something in the rock, because all rocks don't expose photographic films, and she went ahead and isolated radium. She got the Nobel Prize. There again, it was the mind, not the rock, not the key, not the photographic plate, but a phenomenon which she observed, which she couldn't explain, and the research went on in her mind. Scientists are too often ignorant of the fact that scientific discoveries, like any other thing, originate in the mind.

It is with that mind that raja yoga starts. Raja yoga says, "The mind is the thing." It can be your destroyer, as Patrick Fleury said, or it can be your sole aid in elevating you to the highest consciousness, which we call Divinity. Raja yoga takes up the mind, not to destroy it, not to nullify it, not to deaden it, as some yogic practices have done, but to convert it from our master to something which can be our servant, our helper. That is why we say we have mastered something. You ride a horse very capably, you have mastered the art of horsemanship. Master sailor, master craftsman. The word 'master' is used precisely about the mastery of the self through the mastery of the mind. Instead of our obeying our mind's impulses and its orders and its injunctions, the mind becomes obedient to us. This is the simple fact about raja yoga and its purpose.

When we have gained this regulatory control over the mind, we call that state concentration. Concentration is the instrument of revelation. So, you see how, step by step, simple steps, when we are able to focus this mind, like anything else if you are able to concentrate on an object or a subject, it reveals itself to you. Concentration gives you the desired result.

But, can we know God through concentration? My Master said no, because God cannot be an object on which you concentrate, because He is not an object. He cannot be a subject, because He is everything. In the oid esoteric sense, He

is all and everything, and also nothing. In the words of Vedic terminology, He is bigger than the biggest, smaller than the smallest. He is outside His own creation, and He is within the creation as its supporter from within.

So, how are we to know it? He who is moving me from within myself as my Self, how can I know Him? As my Master said most beautifully, "With this eye you can see the whole universe, but the eye cannot see itself." Can you see your own eye? Can you see your own I? No. Therefore, self-knowledge is impossible. This is the conclusion of my Master.

There are systems of thought, philosophy which say, "Know thyself." My Master said it is better to **forget yourself**, because as long as you know yourself, you remember what you are, you remember your miseries, you become a subject of your own subjective self, and you go into this inward spiral of involvement with yourself in the most derogatory and downgrading way, which we call selfishness. So, what is it that we are supposed to do with this mind? Use it as an instrument by which you can regulate your life, using the ten maxims about which Patrick Fleury spoke to you, and there the purpose of the mind ends.

Now, this was almost a stunning revelation to us abhyasis of my Master when he said, "That is all that the mind can do for you." Then what is meditation for? He said it is a discipline. Because, without a regulated mind over which you have total control, you can do nothing. You are only doing what your mind tells you to do. You see something attractive and you go after it. You see something tasty and you want to eat it. You see something intoxicating and you want to drink it.

Which human being has the ability to negate the tendencies of his mind normally? Even the most educated with the highest will power succumb. As my Master used to say, "If education could endow you with spiritual values, professors in

the universities should be moral, ethical people." Many are not. Unfortunately, most are not, nowadays.

So, what is the value of education which cannot give you the fundamental values of life, in the shape of moral principles, ethical principles, viable principles? Should wealth alone give it, all the wealthy people should have been these things. Again, we find it is not there. Should healthy people...? No. So, health does not endow us with this.

This way of negating each aspect — not intelligence, not health, not wealth — is the way of Vedanta which says, *"Neti, neti."* "Not this, not this, not this, not this." Then what is? Because it is a frustrating experience, if you have to go through the whole of life and its characteristics and its possibilities, we will have no time to negate. We can go on infinitely negating, you see.

Sahaj Marg believes in a positive approach. Our ten maxims are all positive things. They don't tell you what not to do; they tell you what to do. It is like telling a child, "Don't tell lies!" The child doesn't know what to do. What is a lie and what is not a lie? To the children, it is often a joke. A lie is a joke to a child. And we give them the consciousness of lies by telling them when they are three years old and two years old, "Don't tell lies, for heaven's sake!" Second confusion: what is heaven? What is the sake of heaven? And, why is heaven involved in my lying?

So we, by our suggestion during the training of children, infuse this. "Don't be afraid. There is nothing in the darkness," the mother tells the child. The child doesn't know why he is being told this, because he is not conscious of fear. Now, when the mother tells him this, he begins to be afraid. "Perhaps there is something in the darkness of which I should be afraid!"

The father, when the child is going to the examination hall, says, "Don't fail and bring me a bad name." Now the child wonders why his father is talking of failure, and how his

failure can relate to his father's good name. "After all, if I fail, I fail. How does it cast aspersions on my father? My father doesn't become a fool because I fail. My father doesn't become rich when I am rich. He doesn't fall sick when I fall sick. So, why should my bad name affect him?"

So you see, this is how we bring up children by giving negative suggestions. My Master said, "Give positive suggestions." What are the positive suggestions? Tell the truth! It is easy to obey, isn't it? "Don't look for other people's goods!", says one of the commandments of another religion. You just tell your child, "Keep what is yours." Because the moment you say, "Don't aspire to other person's goods," the child says, "Aha! It is possible."

I often wonder why in many religions God says, "Thou shall worship no other God but me." Does it mean there are other Gods whom we can worship? The statement seems to imply that, "Friend, there are other Gods, but beware, don't go to them. You come unto me alone." So you see, the idea of God, which is the idea of religion. And religion is a creation of the human mind. Religions were not created by God. God created human beings; human beings created religions.

This is something about which I would like to speak without causing offence to anyone. I have occasion to speak about it everywhere, because it is a puzzling thing. All the great saints of this world — people whom we worship as prophets, as saints, as *rishis* — meditated. Be it Mohammed Sahib, be it Christ, be it Buddha, be it other rishis, the Sufi saints — anybody — they all meditated. What they discovered, what they attained in themselves, the spiritual evolution, the vision of the ultimate Reality, they taught. The teachings became religions.

Now, my question is: if these persons could achieve that transcendent, ultimate Reality only by meditation and not by going through a religious process, what on earth makes religion necessary for us? I mean, it would be untrue to say

that Buddha was a Buddhist. He was a Hindu. His teaching became hardened into the religion called Buddhism. It would be untrue to say Christ was a Christian; he was a Jew. He denounced the Jewish religion, or the way it was practised — let us put it that way. He denounced the Jewish practices, the temple worship, the rituals, the corruption, the lies, and founded a new philosophy of his own by personal *tapasya*, as we call it, spiritual practice, and then he taught and that became a religion. So, Christ could not have been of that religion, though the religion is from him.

Now, my question is: why do we need religions? This is number one. Number two: what has religion produced? If Buddhism had produced a Buddha, I would be the first Buddhist. If Christianity had produced a Jesus Christ, I would be the first Christian. But the religions are the product of people, not vice versa. So, again, why religion? Thirdly, religion comes from the ancient Latin word 'to re-connect', which assumes, first of all, that we are not connected, and secondly, that someone is needed, or something is needed, to connect me back.

Spirituality denies this lack of connection. It says, which connection, what connection, connection with what? It is in you. God is in you, in your heart. For heaven's sake, how can we connect it with Him? How can you be more connected with Him than you are connected now? When He is you, you are He.

So you see, religion is a human creation, like science. Science is a human creation; religion is also a human creation. One going this way, one going that way. Perhaps because of this there have always been problems between science and religion. It is still there today. Now, human creation, like human children, you see — we have children, two children don't agree. Third child comes, three don't agree. Fourth child comes, the four don't agree, and they all run to the father and

to the mother, and the parents say, "Keep quiet! You are all brothers and sisters. Be one!"

Now, here comes another mystifying factor: all religions speak of God as being infinite: "There cannot be more than one God and He is God." Yet, all the religions say, "My God is true; your God is false." I mean, if you write infinity in the mathematical language, it is the same for Hindus, for Christians, for Buddhists, for Muslims, for — I don't know, Timbuktu-ans. Zero is zero for everybody, one is one for everybody. But, how can God be different, when all the religions without exception say, "There is only one God because He is infinite, and there cannot be two infinities"?

So, my Master said, "Religions divide." We have seen from time immemorial how religions have quarrelled, how within the same religion there has been persecution of the most profoundly stupid and cruel ways during the time of the Papacy in the past, in the Middle Ages — people being burnt at the stake, people being excommunicated...

This is another fallacy because, on one side religion says it exists to connect you back with God, and then that same religion says, "I can also disconnect you from God." Does a human being have this power of connection and disconnection? Which God has given this power to mere human beings? You have a right to assist — not to connect or disconnect. Like a doctor cannot kill you, but he can only help you to keep your life. He doesn't even restore life. It is a fallacy and nonsense to say that my doctor restored my life. Restoration comes after we are dead, and no doctor can restore life at that stage. He assists in the process of recovery. This truth you find in the homeopathic science where the great Hahnemann, the discoverer of homeopathy says, "The physician treats; He cures!"

So you see, if you go to the fundamental, basic propositions, whether it be of philosophy, or of religion, or of science, as Einstein himself remarked, "There comes a point

beyond which the mind cannot penetrate; there is a barrier to understanding, and that I call God." It is amusing. It is astonishing that a physicist, a Nobel Prize winner, should yet be able to define God as that point beyond which comprehension cannot go any further. The Veda says the same thing: where the mind cannot penetrate. *"Na tatra vak gacchati na mano."* Where speech does not go; where even the mind cannot penetrate, know that to be the realm of the Divine.

So, that God, who is nameless, who is formless, who has no attributes, who is the highest God spoken of in all religions without exception, is our God, too, in spirituality. You can call Him Allah, you can call Him God, you can call Him Ishwar — it doesn't matter. By giving Him a name we destroy part of His Reality. The Jews called Him "The Nameless One." But in calling him The Nameless One, they gave him a name! It is like the Hindi word *'anamika'* — this is one without a name. But anamika becomes a name.

So you see, that which cannot be spoken about or thought about, that which cannot be the object of your perceptions, that which cannot be known by perception, any perception, any faculty which is human — know that to be God. My Master put it in another way: "Remove the definitions one by one." "God is great" — remove it. "God is merciful" — remove it. "God is cruel" — remove it. "God is unjust" — remove it. When you have got done with all the definitions, what is left is God. You can put it in another way and say, remove all forms, what remains is God. Remove all qualities, what remains is God. Remove the wateriness of water, can water exist? That which makes water water is Divinity. That which makes fire fire is not its heat. Fire is hot, but what is this heat that makes it fire? It is divine. So the Veda says, that which makes that 'ness' of that, that is Divinity. Now, that which makes me a human being must be the Divine in me.

So, spirituality says we are born and live generally like animals. We have the animal tendencies of cruelty, of aggression, of oppression, of selfishness, of greed, of acquisitiveness, territorial-ness, and so on. Remove it progressively by spiritual practise; become a human being first. We are all talking too much about divinisation when we should be talking first about humanization. Are you human yet? My Master says, "I wish you were." He doesn't say, "You are not," because we are human, in a sense, but we have to become human in the true sense, that I have in me a human heart, that I am humane in my approach to life, that they are all brothers and sisters of mine, it doesn't matter which religion they come from, what colour they come from. It is easy to, for instance, condemn apartheid in Africa. But what are the religions of the world doing? If this is a political or a colour-based apartheid, that is a religion-based apartheid. How is it better than this?

We must think! What about the distinction that we create within our own children at home? That this boy is brilliant, send him to college; this fellow is a fool, send him to herd goats. Is it not in another way an apartheid? What about our marital system, that I will marry a beautiful girl or a white girl or a coloured girl? Is it not apartheid? And we talk of idol worship — what is **not** idol worship? A cross in a church is as much an idol as an idol in a temple. And, when we worship diamonds and gold, is it not idol worship, too? And, when we worship a man, be it your own husband, is that not idol worship, too?

So, what is it that we should worship? Should I not worship my husband? No! Love your husband. Should I not worship diamonds? No! Have diamonds; don't worship them. Know them for what they are: a bit of rock temporarily endowed with value because they are rare. If tomorrow, you find in India or in Arabia or somewhere diamond mines so huge that you can pull out seven thousand carats at one stroke, the diamond would be worth less than dust. Why are the prices

being kept up artificially by supplies being limited? Precisely to make them valuable.

Why is God spoken of by religions as a commodity which is difficult to acquire, difficult to keep? Because you want to make God rare so that He can have value for you. Spirituality makes God not cheap, but accessible to everyone, to all who care to do it. How is He more accessible to you than to me? When He is me, He is you. He is You in you. Spirituality re-emphasizes this truth again and again: don't look for Him outside, because if you look for Him outside yourself you are being *bhatkao'ed*, as we say in Hindi — thrown about from here to there by religions, by philosophies, by so-called truths, which are all maybe truth, but they are all only partial truths. They divide. You can go here but not there. He can come here but not there. What is this nonsense? If God is there, I must be able to find Him where I am. Why only in a mosque or in a temple or in a church? Why not in a graveyard? Why not in the toilet? Does He not exist in the toilet?

So you see, God must be put back in His place, and His place is the whole universe, every atom of it. Then this calumny, this isolationism, this separatism of faiths, of religions, of beliefs, will go in one moment. We have, unfortunately, to suit our own personal idiosyncrasies and needs. Put Him in a temple and the Hindu is happy! Because God is in the temple, I go to worship Him once every Saturday or once a month. I put my money in the box kept there. I can feel very self-righteous. I have done my duty, go home and start living my own life again. God is where He is; I am where I am. There is no contact. He cannot see what I am doing. It is a happy, merry life. We don't want God with us every moment of our lives. Who wants God with Him as a permanent companion?

There is a Sufi story of a young Sufi Master, a Sheikh, and one young devotee of his, a girl, who fell madly in love

with him. She wanted to have the relationship of a man and woman with him. He said, "Yes my dear, why not? But only when we are alone." He was a young guru, nice guru, very effective guru. He was always surrounded by his disciples; he was never alone. But one day, after twelve years of going around with him, hoping for the best and fearing the worst, she got him alone in his room. She said, "Sheikh Sahib, how about it? Now we are alone!" He said, "But my dear, I am never alone. He is with me always." Frustrating to the girl, but the truth! If you have Him always with you, you cannot stray from the path of righteousness, of holiness, of godliness.

It is like the rudder of a ship. It is a small piece of wood at the back, but it can move a ten-thousand-tonner this way and that way according to the man who holds the tiller in his hands. This tiny, atomic, or even smaller than the atomic, Being who is residing in my heart, if given His rightful place, will guide me like the tiller of a boat guiding that ship. This is what spirituality is about.

Spirituality says, "You, a mere human being with human foibles, with a human intellect, with human desires, how far do you think you can go?" I mean, this is simple logic. You cannot walk thirty miles, but if you get into even the most dirty and ridiculous buses, as we have in India, then you can get there hopefully in an hour's time. But by walking you are never going there. You want to go from Johannesburg to Bombay — well, nobody would think of swimming the Indian Ocean. But you get into a plane, a mere thing of metal and oil. Don't we surrender to these things? Human contraptions, human ingenuity, but used for our benefit. And, we forget the highest human ingenuity, the creation of the highest human perception: my Divinity, my Self in me, and we are being thrown around like a rudderless boat on the ocean.

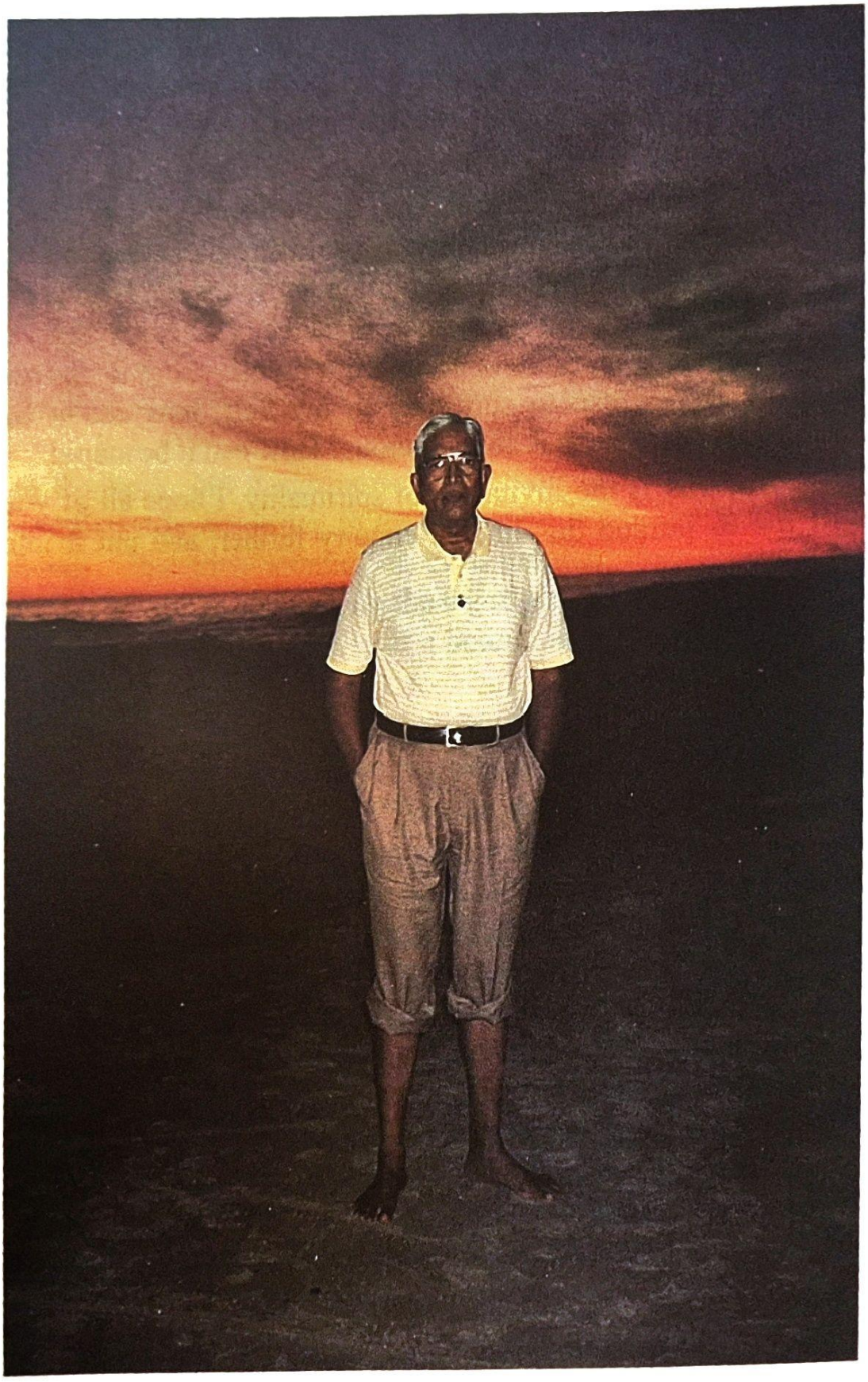
Spirituality says, He is there. Hand over to Him, let Him now guide your life. When the Divine guides your life, it is a divine life. There is no such thing as my living a divine life or

my being divinised. What is divinisation? If you put milk in a cup, does the cup become milk? The cup is still the cup, the milk is still the milk. You put wine in it, it becomes a wine cup. You put poison in it, it becomes a poison cup.

So, this thing is only a vessel. What we put into it determines what we shall be. And, do we have to put anything in it here? No, says spirituality; it is already there. Therefore, we call it Realisation. No evolution is involved. I have to realise that He, my divine Father, my Creator, Me, my Self, is within me. In this, there is no loss of purpose, there is no loss of respect, because to surrender to my Self, how can it be obnoxious? How can it be dangerous? How can it be stupid?

So, this is the invitation of spirituality. I hope all of you will try to pursue this line of enquiry further, and put it into practise.

Thank you.



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DEPENDENCE ON THE MASTER

Lenasia, South Africa
20 April, 1991

Thank you, Khoosalbhai. Khoosalbhai's message will carry weight amongst South African abhyasis, because though many have been critical of him and his family, they still love him and respect him, and I know that even above my voice, his voice will be heard, and that is right because he is the local group leader and what he says must carry conviction to all of you. To me of course, nothing is any more a shock. [chuckles] Whether you co-operate is no shock, when you co-operate also it is no shock. There are no surprises left in my life. It would be foolhardy to say I have seen everything, because life has a funny way of keeping a few surprises in store just around the corner. But I am prepared because He is with me.

My son often tells me, "I don't know how you have the courage to go out to these places, face hostile people, un-co-operative abhyasis, critical opinions, outright rebellion, and still come away out of it. No, no, it has happened and still come out of it with your hair intact on your head." [laughs] So I always laugh at him, I tell him, you know, "If I didn't have the Master, it would be risky, it could even be dangerous. But with the old man with me, there is no danger. Because I have

been trying to teach people that under the Sahaj Marg system, even death cannot come near us, except with Babuji's permission. In fact, death cannot come at all. It is Babuji who will come and say, "My son, or my daughter, it is enough, your progress is enough, your life on earth is fulfilled, come let us go!"

You see, it is like a wife who is waiting in a waiting room in the station, because the husband has gone away to buy something, milk for the baby, food for the children, to get the tickets, and the wife is nervous alone; but there he comes, it may be after half an hour, may be after four hours, and he says, "*Chalo!*" And she is not going to complain and say, "No, no, let us sit here a little longer." Her place is with her husband. At least that is the idea in India that a woman must always be with her husband. And the great idea of *sati* and things like that, take this idea to the extreme that through life and through death we must be together. If that is a case between a merely human relationship like a husband and a wife, how much more it should be true of a Master and his devotees?

So abhyasis must remember, you see, that we are not together here for today and tomorrow. The Master is eternal. But are we eternal? Are abhyasis eternal? Or are we going to be like passengers in a train? Eating together, playing cards, making a few jokes and then each one gets off at his station and goes away. Because life can be like that. If we make a mistake in our relationship with the Master, we are just co-travellers, *musafir, sahayaatri*, but that is no use. He may give you some bread, some butter, he may give you one sitting and then what happens?

I want to tell you a couple of stories about the unfortunate aspect of relationship with Master. He told me that there was only one abhyasi, one person who ever came to him who had already come up to the fourth point in spiritual elevation. He said he has never met anybody, they are

generally at the first point and he has to start the *yatra* from there. He was amazed, because if you remember from here to here [indicates from one point to the next] takes forty-five or fifty years and then five times that, two hundred and fifty; then five times that, thousand two hundred and fifty. It is about a thousand six hundred years of *tapasya* it takes to get to the fourth point. So obviously this boy must have done enormous spiritual practice in his previous *janmas*, because nobody lives thousand six hundred years. And the accumulation of that was he was in the fourth point, yet in the heart region, not qualified for liberation. He came to Babuji, Babuji gave him one sitting, he never came back. Babuji was so sad, he said, "One person in my whole lifetime I saw, who had elevated himself in previous lives up to the fourth point, if he had come for one or two more sittings, I would have liberated him, taken him beyond, but he never came back." I said, "Why?" He said, "Samskara." I said, "Spiritual evolution and samskara go together?" He said, "They always go together. You can rise to the highest level and still fall."

What Khoosalkaka said just now about the need for the physical presence — incidentally I would suggest that you don't say "physical living Master" and all that nonsense: the living representative of the Master, that should be sufficient. In future, let us stick to living representative of the Master. I don't know who is the Master. If I don't know, I wouldn't expect any of you to be wiser and know him. To say he is Babuji is mere trash, mere opinion. Because somebody else says, you are also saying it. It is like an unmarried girl saying, he is my husband. Maybe you love him and you want to marry him, you see, but until the day of the marriage nobody is sure that the marriage will take place.

So let us wait; let us not call even Babuji Master, because he called himself representative of Lalaji Maharaj. He said, "Lalaji is my Master. My Master said this, my Master did that, my Master is always with me, without my Master's permission nothing can happen, by his grace everything

happens." He never said, "I am the Master." Why people call him the Master, I don't know. I used to call him Master too. I still say he is my Master, which he is. That is because I know he is my Master. But for people who don't know he is the Master, it only becomes an empty formality you see, like saying, "De Klerk is my president." He is not your president, he is the president of South Africa. You don't know him; you have never met him. "Oh! He is our president!" In what way?

So let us not use these highfalutin terms to refer to people of whom we know nothing. That is incidental, you see. So, I suggest that you think of the representative of the Master as a living representative, because you cannot have dead representatives. When you say dead Master, living Master, there is so much emotion. How can a Master be dead? "Oh! Masters never die." For that matter, you and I never die too. Our souls are eternal. What makes you think I am any different from my Master or you are different from your Master. If you accept the fact that the soul is eternal, it was never created, therefore it shall never pass away, then between His soul and my soul there is no difference. Between Lalaji's soul and my soul there is no difference. Between God Himself and me there is no difference. So then, where is the Master? Where is the disciple?

These are emotional ideas, concepts, necessary for progress. It is like saying the engine of a train is also another carriage with six wheels or eight wheels. But it can drag the whole train behind it. The other cars cannot drag you, but it can. Therefore it is a locomotive. So this fellow who comes to you as a Master, you know, he is nothing but another human being, with this special ability to pull all of you with him up. Like when you go mountain climbing you have a guide. Where it is very risky you tie yourselves together, when he with his strength, with his ability, with his experience, is able to keep all of you alive and take you up to the mountaintop. So there is nothing special about a Master; also there is nothing

un-special about a Master. "He is what He is," as Babuji used to say.

So, if we need a guide in everything else — in school we need teachers, even for cooking. You girls must have learnt from your mother or somebody else, in that way your mother is your guru for cooking. Your husband is your guru for accounts, for so many things. He is not only the father of your children, he is your husband, he is your beloved, he is someone without whom most of you will think you cannot live. God forbid a day may come when you have to live without him, you see, for one reason or the other. So what happens next, you see, now a husband cannot be replaced. Many people tell me, "Oh! Can you marry again?" This is not a question like that, you see, that is stupid to relate the husband-wife relationship to the guru-disciple relationship. And there is no re-marriage either because it is the same fellow who comes again and again to help you or he makes somebody capable of helping you and leaves you there with him and says, "Carry on," like an engine driver changes from so many times. You take a train at Cape Town, he changes at Pietermaritzburg and another engine comes on in Durban, a third comes somewhere else, but the train goes on. "No, no, I must have only that engine driver, you see I love him." Yes, if you love him, get out and go away with him.

I often wonder why so many people say they loved Master so much that they are not able to even live without him — why they are not dead? It's a lie. When mere women have been able to die with their husbands, why a devotee is not able to die with the Master? Don't you think it's a lie and a hypocrisy to say, "Oh, I loved Babuji, (sniff, sniff) I cannot live without him (sniff, sniff)," and then they are eating salad with this hand, a pizza with this hand and an ice cream to top it off. "No, no, I am only taking in his grace; in his mercy, after all he gives, therefore I must eat." Second lie, third lie, fourth lie, fifth lie. So you see, beware of making statements of your love for the Master.

First of all, in the Hindu tradition, one does not speak of love. You don't tell your husband, "I love you." Which one of you will tell your husband, "Darling I love you, give me a kiss." Would you do it? You would be ashamed. If you are still Indian women, you wouldn't even call your husband by name. Will you say, "Amboobhai, *yahan aao.*" Or Govindkaka, you see, it's not done. In our *sanskriti* [culture] it is not done. In Babuji Maharaj's *Autobiography,* Volume I, there is only one reference to his wife. He says, "I was married to my wife, her name was Bhagwati. She was a woman with bad temper." I asked Babuji, "Have you nothing more to write about your wife? How much she loved you, how much she helped you, how much she..." "Not necessary," he said. "Her bad temper gave me the ability to develop patience in my life, tolerance in my life. She helped me spiritually."

At that time there was one Mr. P.C. Chaturvedi, advocate of the Allahabad High Court, who was also sitting there. He said to me, "You know Parthasarathi, strictly speaking even that mention of his wife here is wrong, because he is a guru, he is a spiritual leader, he should not even mention his wife by name. That is a concession to modern duty." So we don't speak of love you see. Every time somebody speaks of love for the Master, "Oh! I loved Babuji Maharaj." I say, "What is this?" Is this the love of a husband and a wife or a man and a prostitute. You don't love your wife in such a way that you are openly, blatantly exhibitionistic about it — not Indian culture, not Indian tradition.

So, the relationship between a Master and his disciple is also something very sacred. People ask me, "Don't you love the Master?" I say, "No. I don't know what it is. When I know what it is I will tell you." Is love sleeping together? Perhaps, I don't know. Is love not sleeping together? Most probably, that also I don't know. Is love not loving? Very often. Have you not experienced moments when you did not love your husband? *"Jahannam mein jaye sala."* Have you not felt? If you say no, you are lying. Every husband has felt it, every

wife has felt it. *"Ishwar humne is, bewakoof se kyon shadi ki."* I have not met a woman to date who has not regretted her marriage some time or the other. I have not met a man, too, who has not regretted his marriage very often in his lifetime. *"Emaj farak che."* [This is the difference.] These people regret it a few times; they regret it very often. When they are old they regret it more and more. [laughter]

So, why I say this? Because in every relationship there are ups and downs, there are moments of ecstasy, there are moments of liberation, there are moments of joy, there are moments of despair. Like the day and the night, they have to alternate, otherwise life would have no meaning. Sunset would have no meaning except when it is dark, you see. If it was dark, dark would not love the sunshine. Suppose it is shining twenty-four hours a day, you would all be roasted, you know. You would have been roasted long ago. Your houses would have been burnt. Your farms would have been destroyed. Can you imagine what it would be like to have twenty-four hours sunshine all your life. Similarly, if you had twenty-four hours love from your husband, and the blighter wouldn't let go of you, even to cook — imagine what a mess it would be. It is bad enough, you know, once in fifteen days, once a month. Imagine clinging together like frogs or crabs. What would be your fate, your destiny? It is good that love is only a few moments in a lifetime. It would not be supportable.

But the love of the Master is not like that, you see. Why? Because he makes no demands. He wants nothing from you. He has everything to give, but nothing to take. Therefore, the love for the Master must be of a similar nature. Nothing to ask but everything to give. He has nothing to ask, but everything to give. We must also have nothing to ask, but everything to give. Where is this relationship among you with your Master? Where? In whom? I know some abhyasis, you know, tend to weep when thinking of the Master, but that is emotion. Love is not to be mistaken for emotion. Emotion is not to be mistaken for love. So you see all this blah blah blah

blah blah blah: everybody loves Master, "*Mohabbat, ishq*, etc.", this, that, in many languages, *la amore*. What is this? Are we writing novels here, romantic novels? Not at all. We are dealing with reality, with truth, with existence in the absolute raw, naked husband.

One who loves will not speak of that love. One who speaks of love does not know what is love. It is the same story. You see, what Babuji said about knowing the truth, the ultimate truth, "He who speaks does not know. He who knows cannot speak." What can you say of reality? What can you say of the truth? So the reality of an abhyasi's development spiritually is reflected in more and more silence on the part of the abhyasi. Because as he experiences more and more profound truths and levels of spiritual elevation, he can speak less and less about such things. Ultimately he cannot speak at all. When you ask Babuji, "What is truth?" He says, *"Bhai, sach sach hai."* ["Brother, truth is truth."] "God is God. What else can be God?" He cannot say, you see, because you cannot describe God.

How can you describe love? When you say, "Love is God. *Ishwar satya hai.*" ["God is truth."] If you cannot describe God you cannot also describe love. "No, no, love is then this, receiving a nice present. Yes. But it is not love. It is an aspect of love, it is an expression of love. Love is being kicked in the backside when your husband is not happy with you. It is also an expression of love, negative expression perhaps. Love is being hugged and kissed. True. But it is not love, it is only an aspect of love. The sun is the same but in summer it is hot, in winter it is cold. What makes the sun change? The sun doesn't change — the experience changes. Why? Because at one moment we are in its direct connection, at another moment it is at an angular direction, therefore this is cold, that is hot. When can I feel the love of the Master **most**? When my connection with him is direct. "The shortest distance between parallel lines is the perpendicular," Babuji said.

But if you are going to seventeen preceptors and political meetings and high point and low point connections and all this nonsense, by the time that love comes to you, it is less than the love of your husband for you, such as it is. So you see, the need to maintain a direct contact with your Master is paramount, absolute, vital. Let us not play with the Master unless you are only playing with spirituality. Because in love also there is a lot of games being played. A lot of humbug going on under the name of love: multiple marriages, multiple associations. "I love him." "I also love him." "I also love him, what shall I do?" And then we have pictures of Radha and Krishna in our house, Shiva and Parvati in our house, and we go to temples and pray that my life may be a happy one. If possible, Lord, with all three.

Now God can love many. We can only love one. You see, Babuji Maharaj once said... This is something husbands may not like to hear but I will take the risk. Babuji said, "Even the husband and wife love must be only on this level but not on the spiritual level." It cannot. Therefore your love for the Master should not affect your love for the husband. And more important, your love for your husband should not affect your love for the Master. "No, no, I love my husband so much. *Pati seva mein karti hoon.*" ["I serve my husband."] What is the need of spirituality? You will go where your husband goes. Depends on where he's going, you see. Not all husbands go to heaven. Not all husbands are going to be liberated. Few husbands are going to know Master, and perhaps one in seventeen thousand years may reach realisation. Have you such a husband? Then stick to the fellow like a leech. Live together, be happy together, love the Master.

This love is a different love. This love is a different love. Often there is a confusion, "How can I love my Master and my husband? You told me you cannot love two people, only one." But this is a temporal love, you see, a love of a human being for a human being. That is a love of a human being for God. This must be realised in your hearts because we are a

grihastha marg. We are not sannyasis. For sannyasis and yogis, it is easy, the wife, woman has no husband, the man has no wife. We can claim we are loving God.

But in a *grihastha sanstha* it is important to realise that human love must exist without affecting divine love, and divine love must exist without affecting human love. A devotee should not run away from his family. Why? Because it is his duty to maintain his family. Secondly, because he loves his family, this love is no interference with that love. Otherwise we can make mistakes, you see; we can make mistakes in the human life, which is not so bad, we can make mistakes in our divine association, which is terrible, which is final doom for us. So it is necessary that we must accept a living representative of the Master. After all, Babuji Maharaj said, "He alone is the true Master, all the gurus on earth are but His representatives." So in that sense even Lalaji is a representative of the Master. Babuji is a representative of his Master. I'm a representative of my Master and there are going to be, hopefully, if you all behave properly and keep the torch alight, there is going to be a *parampara*, representatives of the Master. But if this trouble is going to happen every time one fellow dies and another fellow comes in, what is going to happen to the *sanstha*?

You must also think of the future. Suppose your son is not accepted when you send him to the market or to the bank. Will you not say, "He is my son. How dare you not recognize? Babubhai, you know that he is my son. Why did you send him back empty-handed?" Will you not ask? If it is from a mere *chokra* [boy] here on earth, six-year-old, seven-year-old, eight-year-old, who is worth nothing except your name and your reputation and the fact that he is going to get your wealth, sometimes late in the future, by which time you will have not have any wealth to give him. What is the status of a representative who is the son of his father whom you consider your Master? It's very dangerous to play with such fellows. Not that I am dangerous, but the principle is dangerous, you

see. If you cannot tolerate insult to your son, He will not tolerate insult to his son.

Babuji Maharaj has written in his autobiography that Lalaji told him, "You are my representative. People must obey you, people must love you as they love me, otherwise cut them off. If they are intolerant towards you, if they insult you, I will take it as an insult to myself." It is written in the books. You must read it, you see. So, in one way I am my Master's son, in another way I am my Grand-Master's grandson. Now we have to be afraid of two people getting angry. And God always there, you see, somebody who is doing divine work. Nature interferes with him, even nature can be cut off. But there is nothing to be frightened about, because in this system there is no punishment, but there will be no reward, you see. I consider that the denial of a reward is a greater punishment than a punishment. If I work like hell, and I'm paid ten rand when I should be paid two hundred rand, it is a punishment. Isn't it? That is why we are so much against discrimination and this and that, and women want equality with men. "When I do same work as my husband, why is he paid three thousand rand and I'm paid sixteen hundred rand?", women ask.

So, withholding of a reward can be a greater punishment than a punishment which is stupid. Who wants to punish? What do you gain out of it? But let me assure you, it is at the same time Master punishing himself, because his heart bleeds when he cannot give you what he wants to give you. Your heart bleeds when you cannot give your child his meal because he is sick. Don't you weep? Have you not gone to bed sleepless and foodless because your son is sick or your daughter is sick? And your husband says, "Why the hell don't you eat, stupid woman? He is sick, you're also going to be sick." And you say, "How can I eat when my son doesn't eat?"

So, do you know how much misery you cause to him whom you call your Master? When he cannot give you, his

suffering is much more than your petty human suffering when you cannot feed your child. What love are you capable of? Hugging your child, and kissing your child is not love, it is selfishness. My child must love me, otherwise he will run away, so that let me hug him, let me kiss him, let me give him everything he wants. But in spirituality that doesn't work, the Master does not give you to retain you; the Master retains you to give you. And he tries his best to retain you without closing the doors, because closing the doors is imprisonment. The doors must be open, yet you must not leave. Because, who wants involuntary *bhaktas*? You see, that is not *bhakti* any more, that is a prisoner and the warden, jail warden, relationship. We don't want it here. Doors are always open, people are always free to leave, as they are free to come in.

Everybody is welcome to come in or to leave — it is your choice. But don't misuse that choice, because freedom is a dangerous thing. He who cannot know how to deal with freedom should not be given freedom. I have told my Master very often, "Perhaps you are doing a disservice to our abhyasis because you've not trained them to handle freedom and yet you are giving freedom." He says, "How can I train them to give freedom, to handle freedom, without giving them freedom first." It is like your child, you give him money so that he can know how to handle money. You don't wait till he's a PhD in economics before you hand over your wealth to him.

So we have to train people in freedom by giving them freedom, progressively more and more freedom, until there is total freedom. But freedom from the Master can never exist. This is a unique system. Throughout the history of this world, in any system, under any religion, there has always been the teaching that as a disciple develops he is progressively less and less dependent upon the Master or his guru until after twelve years, fifteen years, twenty years the guru is totally free of the disciple, the disciple is totally free of the guru. He says, "Now, my son, you are free of me. You can go."

In Sahaj Marg, Babuji Maharaj says exactly the opposite: the higher you go, the greater is your dependence upon the Master until, at the highest level, it is total dependence. So if any of you has this idea that after a few years you will be free of the old man, it is only a temporary relationship, let me accept it, let me surrender my freedom for a few years until I'm in cosmic region or super-cosmic region, then I will be free — forget it. Sahaj Marg is opposite to everything that has existed. In other disciplines it is discipline which matters; here it is love which matters. In others it is abhyas which matters; here it is bhakti which matters. Abhyas is important but, as I have said again and again, abhyas does not guarantee anything to you, it does not give you any right to expect anything. Bhakti does, love does. In all other systems you begin with total dependence on the guru and end with no dependence on the guru. Here it is exact opposite: you begin with no dependence but the dependence must grow more and more.

It is like a marriage again, you see, because in the beginning there is little dependence upon, I mean mutually between the husband and the wife. But as you grow older, they become more and more dependent. You can see an old couple who have been married for fifty years, they cannot live without each other any more. The dependence is total.

So you see, there are many things you have to understand. You have all been hearing very little about the real Sahaj Marg, I'm sorry to say. You have only been told superficial things, you have only been told, you know, with glazed eyes and a little tears, "Babuji's great, Babuji's wonderful, *Babuji divine che, Babuji maro divya vani che...*" What is this divine? What is this voice? Where is it? Is it in Shahjahanpur? It was. Where is it now? It is everywhere. Is it with you? If you wish. This is, again where God is infinite, where God is everywhere. Yet I don't have God with me.

That is why we pray, that is why we meditate, that's why we do so many things. It is too stupid to say, "If He is everywhere, is He not also with me?" Then why do you feel He is not with you? If that is true, you cannot deny that God is everywhere. But since the sun is everywhere shining, but I am in the shade because I have shut myself inside a building. If I close the windows and the doors I will be in total darkness. He who feels that he or she is not with God is precisely in this darkness of shutting yourself up within yourself, closing all the doors, and saying to hell with the rest. These doors have to be opened, these windows have to be opened. The place has to be ventilated, the *badboo* [foul smell] must go, the mustiness must go. What is this window that you have to open, or the door? It is the heart. There is an old song I used to hear when I was in Bengal, sung by a fellow called K.C. Dey. *"Tanka karle bandh diwara, manki khidki khol."* ["Close the door of the body and open the window of the heart."] And who is to open it? You cannot open it because you are afraid. Like at midnight somebody rings your door bell, you are not going to get up to open it. You are afraid, it may be somebody with a rifle, AK-47. We don't know, you see.

So, the guru opens the door. Kabir Saheb has said that God puts himself into the heart, locks the door and hands over the key to the guru. Even God cannot open your doors, because if he could have done it he would have done it long ago. Therefore, the guru comes with the key, says, "My son, or my daughter, here is the key, I'm going to open it. Are you willing?" "No, I am afraid." "Yes, but I am there to look after you." "How can I depend upon you? You are old, you are frail, you are weak, you have not much education, you are poor. Even your food I have to cook for you, to take you to the centre I have to bring my car for you. Your clothes I have to wash for you. What can you do for me?" He says, "Try. I may not able to cook, I may not able to walk, I may not able to lift even, you know, my glass of water. But I can help you in what I have to do for you." This trust having been able to develop,

if you had developed this trust, we would no more go to temples or whatever it is, because then He is enough. One who can open the heart of a human being which has been locked almost forever since creation — have you tried opening a lock of your house in Surat which has not been open for ten years? It will not open. Sometimes you have to break it. Often you have to oil it and go around diding, diding, diding, diding, until it clicks open very, very reluctantly, and then the door will not open because the hinges are rusted.

If that is the case of a house in Surat or in Nadiyaar or Derawil, or wherever it is, what about this door which you have never opened notwithstanding your love for your husband and your wife and your children and your father and your mother? Which proves that since this is not opened, all that lie was a *ghota* affair, you see. Lies after lies after lies, conventional love. Everybody loves his husband, "Do you think I don't love my husband," asks the girl. "Oh come on, Chariji everybody loves his wife. How can it be that I don't?" He does not say I love my wife. He says everybody loves his wife, how is it that I cannot love my wife? It's a negative answer. Same says the wife, "No, no, don't you think it is the duty of every woman to love her husband?" Love and duty, how can you love because of your duty to love? You may be dutiful because you love, but you cannot love because you are dutiful, otherwise you will love your bosses and your doctors and your grocery shop assistants. They are dutiful, sometimes they are beautiful too, isn't it.

So you see, we must have a very precise understanding of our present state. Then we come to the question of what I am to do, what is this love for the Master, how should I love him? Where is my heart? Does it exist? Yes. When we have a heart attack we feel the heart. But otherwise, do we ever feel the heart? Even physically we don't know where it is. "My heart," somebody says, "I don't know where is my heart." If it has gone out of yourself, it's a very risky proposition, you see, like giving money to somebody else. "No, no, I have given my

heart to my husband, Chariji." "Oh? Then what are you meditating with? Where is the divine light in the heart? It is with Him? Then will He make the progress or will you make the progress?"

So, let us not indulge in these fanciful ideas of love and this and that, you see. Let us first learn what is love; let us learn love through loving. This cannot be theoretically taught: "How to Love in Ten Easy Lessons". It's not possible. That is a different sort of love, you see. *Kama Sutra*, yes, but it doesn't teach love. It teaches *kama*. Kama and love are not the same. Kama and *prema*, they are two different things. So, all of us have kama, there's no doubt about it. Therefore the world is going on. Without kama there would be no world, there would be no children. When you go to the temple, the blessing they give you is, *"Ishta kamyartha phala siddhyartham."* "May you get that which you desire." And if all that you desire is a husband, you get a husband. If you desire a promotion with your husband, you get a promotion. You don't get God, you don't get even divinity, not at all spiritual progress. *"Ishta kamyartha phala siddhyartham."* This is what they say in temples. For this we build temples, for this we go and pray, and then we knock our heads on the marble floors and become afraid of our *pujaris* [priests], and when he says, "Do *prayaschitta*," you do *prayaschitta*. When he says, "*Be taka apo*," ["Give two percent."] you give two percent. *Be taka* of what? Of the profit of your company. Isn't it? You are trying to buy love of God by giving him money.

That which cannot ever be bought even in the human relationship, cannot be bought from God. Can you buy your husband's love? "Darling, give me ten rands worth of love." He says, "It's my money, then. I earn it, and you are giving back to me and asking me for the love." That is the first objection. Second objection, he will say, "Where have you been before my marriage? Somewhere where you were taking money for love." There would be suspicions. "What were you before, my dear, that you think money can buy love? Was it

you, was it your mother, was it your aunty?" And you would be extremely embarrassed to answer such questions. So, let us not try to buy love. Love cannot be bought. Let us not try to cheat in love, because there can be no cheating in love.

Love is a matter of trust, of faith, of surrender. First there must be trust, next there must be faith, it must culminate in surrender. Without all these things, where is love? There is not even trust to begin with. So you see the lessons of spirituality can be learned in several ways. Failure is a stepping stone to success. But is it a desirable way? We have failed so often if history is be believed, if philosophy is to be believed, if our shastras are to be believed, we must have come through so many lives to come to the human existence. So we must have made mistakes and mistakes, and mistakes after mistakes, over *janmas* and *janmas*, and yet we are here. So, we have not learned by mistakes. Failure is a stepping stone to success — nonsense. But if you fail in the right way, it can still be successful if you are willing to learn from your mistakes. But we are learning from mistakes only how to continue to make that mistake. When are we going to learn?

So you see, you cannot stop with spirituality and say, "I love my Master, Babuji was great, he was a saint?" How do you know? "He was a special personality." What do you know of a special personality? Have you ever met one, have you ever spoken to one? Has he ever revealed to you his speciality? Then what is all that blah, blah, you know, mouthing empty words, pretending to know everything about Sahaj Marg. We are great because we say so. Mowgli, you know, the Bhandar-log of Rudyard Kipling: "We all say so, so it must be true." Have you read Kipling? Some of you must have. Otherwise, you should read it again, *The Jungle Book.* "We all say so, so it must be true," says the Bandar-log. They are happy. In their ignorance they are wise; but we in our wisdom are stupid. Which is better? I think the Bandar-log, because at least they are happy. We are neither happy nor wise. That is why we are being tossed, you know, here and

there, there is that doubt in the heart, which says, "Are you really a bhakta? Do you really love the Master? Do you really know who is the Master? Do you know what is a Master? Do you know what is spirituality? Do you know what is sadhana? Do you know what is abhyas?"

You are yourself asking yourself these questions, therefore you are troubled, you are restless, you run from pillar to post. If you had answers to these questions, positive questions, there should be no doubt in the heart about who is who, what is what, where is where, when is when, and why is why. **Why** is the fundamental question.

So, spirituality is a very profound subject. It is simple in its practice. It is very profound if you want to understand it. Therefore Babuji Maharaj said, "Don't try to understand it. You don't have the intelligence to understand it." I'm not saying this, Babuji said it when he said, "My books are for the future. Future generations will understand what I'm really trying to say in my books." Babuji Maharaj has said this explicitly; it is printed. So, what are we doing with his books? Well, we try to read, we try to understand. But if you use your heart, you can really understand what that man is trying to say. But we don't use our hearts, we use our heads, and, excuse me, the heads of the average Indians are not very effective at this. We are not born to be intellectuals. So, trust the heart. After all, you love with your heart, and you have not gone wrong. Isn't it? So, why not love the old man also with your heart and see what he is trying to say, instead of just intellectualizing the love and creating fanciful situations of love for the Master. "No, no, I cannot live without Him. When Babuji Maharaj passed away in 1983 something in me died." What something died? Where is that something which died? Do you know what was that something?

So you see, let us not lie to ourselves, I don't mind your telling me lies. I am hearing lies all my life, I will listen to more, it doesn't matter, but you must not tell lies to yourself.

Babuji Maharaj told me once, "Tell all the lies you want, but never lie to yourself because when you start lying to yourself, your life becomes a lie, you don't know what is the truth and a lie any more." Suppose you say, "I am Usha," to her and "I am Kanta," to her and "I am Ratnaben," to her. The time will come when you won't know your own name. "No, no, am I Kanta, Usha, or Ratnaben?" And your husband will come, "What are you sitting like this? Breakfast, where is it? I have to go to office." "No, no, please tell me, what am I? Am I Ratnaben or Kantaben or Ushaben?" "So what, have you gone crazy?" will you not ask. Because we tell too many lies, we don't know what we are eventually.

So, never lie to yourself. You can tell me lies. You can tell me you loved Babuji Maharaj — I will accept it. You can tell me you are meditating sincerely — I will accept it. It's not my business to doubt what you say, but remember, if you tell lies to yourself, your spiritual progress is condemned to zero, your future is condemned to zero, and everything else is condemned to zero. So, it should be like the wastepaper basket, put into the Master only things which you can throw away. You don't put fifty-rand notes into the wastepaper basket; that you protect carefully. In fact, every good woman in every good house makes sure before the wastepaper is thrown away that there is nothing valuable in it. And that is all right for running the house, but with the Master, put everything you have which is valuable with him for safe custody, for development. He will give you interest back like no bank can give you. Give him one heart, you receive a million hearts in exchange, because his heart contains all hearts.

So, I hope that this message will be understood, practised, meditated upon. And may you all grow, because I find that in South African abhyasis there is hardly the beginning of spirituality. Excuse me for saying it, there is hardly the beginning of spirituality. Spiritually, for me, this audience is a disappointment. I thought, you know, with

Jambavans here, we say Jambavan because he is long-lived, people who claim to have known Master for sixteen years, eighteen years, twenty years, who weep when they hear his name, burst into tears, where is the spiritual progress to match all that emotion? Where is it? I don't see it, you see, unless I am blind and, as you say, I am not the representative of the Master, perhaps, who knows? If that is your conclusion, then he will have to come and help you. But if you accept my conclusion and are willing to be co-operative and say, "Now help me, for heaven's sake. Eighteen years have gone," I am at your service.

Thank you.

9

A Direct Connection

Lenasia, Johannesburg, South Africa
21 April, 1991

So, that is a beginning, and I think it is a foundation for our future work, with hopes and expectations which will no doubt be fulfilled by Babuji's grace. A committee is necessary only to regulate the working of the Mission. As I was explaining to the preceptors this morning, under the constitution of the Mission and the by-laws, the founder President, Babuji Maharaj, and his successor-presidents have this sole right of nominating the next spiritual representative, who alone shall be the President of the Mission.

Our constitution says that only the nominated spiritual representative can be the President, nobody else. It is a merging of two functions in one individual, the spiritual function and authority and the temporal running of the Mission. The same merging of double functions evolves automatically on the preceptors; they are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the abhyasis entrusted to them, they are also responsible for the functioning of the Mission in its centres, and as a collective body of preceptors forming the committee now for South Africa, for the whole Mission in this country.

So they are at your service, the President is absolutely at your service, in both spheres, to set the Mission in order, to look after your spiritual needs, to offer you the spiritual elevation that the Sahaj Marg system promises, that the Master guarantees if we are sincere, if we are ardent, and if we have the one-pointed aspiration to go to the spiritual goal. As abhyasis you should not be bothered about the constitution and the committee and these things. The committee is there to assist the President in proper activities of the Mission; it does not concern you at all.

You **should** be concerned with the proper working of the preceptors, and as we milk our cows, so you should milk our preceptors for your service, and see they are kept on their toes. You have a right to expect that when you ask for a sitting they should give it, though normally, the preceptors are supposed to say when you should have an individual sitting. But if you are in trouble, if you have some tension within yourself, some confusion, a spiritual state which requires attention, you should rush to your preceptors and they are bound, they are duty bound to give you a sitting at once. No preceptor has any authority to refuse a sitting when there is a sincere need, a genuine need for it. Please remember this.

You also all have a right to write to me direct. Between the President and the abhyasis, whether they are preceptors or abhyasis, there is only a direct connection. You don't have to go through your preceptors, you don't have to go through your centre-in-charge, you don't have to go to the secretary of the Mission here. If you want to maintain direct contact with me on spiritual matters, I suggest you must write to me direct. Otherwise, there is always confusion because of suppression of information, suppression of facts, dilution of information, sometimes even non-transmission of information. So, please feel free to write to me direct, in any language you choose, it does not matter. I must also caution you that you may not receive a reply in writing.

Babuji Maharaj used to say, "When you write to me with a problem, what you need is its solution, not a reply." And I remember, when I used to be at the Benares University as a student, I used to write to my father for some money and he would send me the money. Then I would write to him and say, "Why didn't you reply?" He said, "I have sent you the money. Is it not sufficient reply?" So, my reply must be in the form of work. To resolve your problems, that I assure you, you will have.

So, this as far as the Mission organization here is concerned, I am happy to see full attendance this morning. Now I propose we have a sitting, because it is that which clarifies everything internally. Intellectual discussion and argumentation only leads to disputation. Sittings clear everything, because the wisdom of the inner self is awakened, true understanding results, and comprehension is total. Therefore in a few moments we shall start meditation.

10

CLEANING IS MOST IMPORTANT

Lenasia, Johannesburg, South Africa
21 April, 1991

I don't think there is much to be said except the repeated request to maintain the system pure in its practise. Babuji Maharaj used to say, "You cannot take the medicine of an allopath and an ayurveda and a homeopath all together because they don't work." I tried to tell you all the other day the very clear distinction between religion and spirituality. If you have read some of one of my diaries which have been published in *In His Footsteps,* Volume 1, there I had pointed out how religion is only the kindergarten school where the child is taken, offered to the deity by its parents, as a symbol of which the hair is shaved off, and some sort of initiation. And also there is that old idea that if you go to a temple once you should not have to go there a second time. If the surrender has been correct and perfect, there should be no need for a second visit.

The second most important point is no idol or picture becomes worship-able until what you call *pranapratistha* is done, that means the divine energy must be infused into it. It is

assumed nowadays that the priests who are doing this have the capacity to do it. That assumption is wrong. I think it has been many, many centuries since any priest has had this capacity.

So, the idol remains a mere piece of stone or metal, and by worshipping it we get nothing except perhaps a momentary satisfaction, a temporary peace of mind, that we have done something which we should have done long ago, and a hope for the future. Secondly, if there does exist a person who can infuse divinity into an idol, surely he should be able to infuse it into us, in which case it would be better to go to the person concerned and not to the temple.

So, in whichever way you look at temple worship, it seems to be ineffective. It is not a question of whether it is right or wrong — it is ineffective. Therefore, for these reasons Babuji Maharaj said, "We do not recommend temple worship under the Sahaj Marg system." We use the words 'not recommend'; there is no prohibition, and preceptors would do well not to prohibit anything, remembering that when you prohibit something there is always a reaction to do that which we are prohibited from doing. There is that old experience of the Americans during the thirties when they had prohibition in their country, which created an enormous liquor trade and made billionaires of many people and drunken louts of enormous masses of people. So, prohibition is useless.

I know many of the problems here have come because of a hard attitude towards such things, a dictatorial attitude, saying "You should not do this, you shall not do that." We must remember that, in his wisdom, my Master has given us a set of ten maxims, where there are no do-not-do-this. They are not a set of maxims which says, "Thou shall not do this, thou shall not do that," which is the beauty of Sahaj Marg system. The Sahaj Marg system is a positive system which tells you what you **should** do. If you want your son to go and meet a neighbour at, say, number 10 Rose Avenue, you don't tell him, "Don't go to number one, don't go to number two, don't

go to number three, don't go to number four." He'll say, "Papa, for heaven's sake, why don't you tell me where I **should** go?"

So, Sahaj Marg says only, "Do!" The ten maxims are beautifully structured. They are structured for our benefit, so that we can regulate our lives in all these, as human beings, as spiritual aspirants, as advanced spiritual aspirants, and even when we reach the top. It starts off with the first, where it says, "Wake up before the sun rises." And goes on one after the other. You see, they are all very simple to follow. But when we start practising them, we find that we can run into difficulties. Eat what is put before you with love. Often they want something other than what is put before us. You get *khichdi*, you want *dhokla*, you get *khaman*, or something like that, it goes on and on. We never want what we have and we always want that which we cannot have.

This is human mind and its play. So, they are very simple, but like all simple things, they are not easy. You should not confuse between simplicity and easiness. "Bring water in a glass." It is a simple instruction; but you can break the glass, the water may not be in the tap, so many things may happen. Many people make the mistake of trying to start with maxim number 1, and when they are not able to rise at dawn, they give up the whole effort and stop there. But we should start with something which we can do. Take any of the ten and start off with one which is simplest and go on to the next and the next and the next, and you will find in a matter of months it is very simple to, in a fairly reasonable and sincere way, conform to those ten maxims. They are not rules.

You know, originally they were called 'ten commandments'. But later on, one Mister P.C. Chaturvedi, who is an advocate at the Allahabad High Court, pointed out that '*usool*' in Hindi does not mean commandment. *Usool* means maxim or principle. So, even that slight taint of a commandment was removed. It also smacked of the Christian

Ten Commandments, and people started wondering why Christianity has ten, and we also have ten. Why not? It's like saying when she has five fingers why also should I have five fingers, when we all have the same equipment physically. God has not changed the equipment, he changes the nature of the equipment. All cars have engines, but a Mercedes Benz's engine is not the same as a Volkswagen or a BMW or my Ambassador in India. So, engines are the same but engines are also different. Similarly, we all have five fingers, but no five fingers are the same.

So, we should not mistake that Babuji borrowed something from Christianity or borrowed something from Buddhism. The works of my Master and of our grand Master are very original. They are fundamental research into spiritual science, into spiritual values, into spiritual practice. There is nothing borrowed in Sahaj Marg. In fact, as I told you in one of my talks, if you really go deeply and ponder into the principles and the practice you will find everything is opposite what normally is done in society, whichever religion it may be.

So, we have here at our disposal a system which is unique, which is fundamental, which is tailor-made to the needs of modern times, which is simple to practise, which makes no demands other than sincerity of efforts. You all know that in Sahaj Marg there is no demand for money, there are no fees payable, there is no membership, and anything which you want to give to support the activities of the Mission must be totally voluntary. The Mission is run only from voluntary donations. It has no profit making activities; profit is not the motive of the Mission. **Your** profit is the motive of the Mission, your spiritual evolution, your ultimate reaching the goal. In that sense, the Mission has totally altruistic purposes behind its functioning. When this is so, would it be wise to neglect it and relegate it to the background and continue to go to temples where we have to pay through our noses? It is a modern, what shall I say, fashion, that we dress well and go to

temples. In the old days one had to go in wet *saris* and wet *dhotis*. One could not go well-dressed to temples. We don't go to temples as brides; we go to temples as beggars, clean beggars. Prayer is begging, as Babuji Maharaj said, in the traditional sense.

In Sahaj Marg, we don't beg. As one speaker, I think it was Govindbhai, said, "We don't beg from our father." I would draw your attention to one sentence, I think it was in *Voice Real*, where Babuji says, "I never thought that what was my Master's was also not mine." It is a very profound statement. When I printed that book, it made a profound impression upon me. "I never thought that what was my Master's was not also mine." Babuji put it in his usual inverted fashion, translating from Hindi, "*Hamne yeh kabhi nahin socha ki jo mere malik ki hai, woh mera bhi nahin hai.*" Then I said, "What am I doing? Stupid, myself — you know, I had to hit myself on my head. Where is the giving? Where is the taking? Where is the asking? Where is the receiving? I have only to realise that I am the son and he is my father in a spiritual sense, and everything that is his is mine." When next I went to Shahjahanpur I told Babuji, "There is one sentence in your book which has merit, which is worth your weight in gold, diamond, platinum and all put together." He said, "Which is that?" I repeated this to him. He said, "You see, so far you are the only person who seems to have noticed this sentence and appreciated it."

What a tragedy that we print books where such remarkable wealth of meaning is hidden, there for everybody to see. It only proved to me that when you want to hide something, open it! When you want to keep a secret, tell it to everybody. And when you want something not to be noticed, publish it in the books. See, what a tragedy! And here we are running after Babuji, thinking he is God, you are a slave, you are a sinner — all rubbish. A son is a son whether he is a slave or a sinner or a saint. The son can never be higher than his father in one way; you may be bigger than your father, your

father can be five-feet-one, you may be six-feet-four. He may earn two hundred rand, you may earn two million rand, but still you are the son, he is always the father. In this sense, in a spiritual hierarchy, the guru is always higher than the disciple; there is no question. This is why we need the guru more and more as we progress. Because he is ever in advance of us.

If you have read Babuji's works, you know that he has written, "Lalaji Maharaj is swimming in the ocean of bliss, and I am swimming behind him, and he is passing on his further acquisitions of spiritual wealth to myself." Babuji said this and then he laughed and said, "In return, whatever I am earning will come to you," but you see the whole thing is misted. What do we do with it? We are only earning to give away to our progeny, shall we say, spiritual progeny behind us. So, it is a link, a chain where the whole thing seems to be a mystery. That I have to earn something to give to the next man and he earns to give to the next man and he earns to give to the... What do we retain? Perhaps the joy of receiving and giving, nothing else.

So, the idea that we gain anything in spirituality is false, that we have to get something from the guru is false, that we have to become something even, is false. Because Babuji Maharaj said **there is no becoming here, there is only unbecoming**. From what I am to what I was is a process of dissolving off all complexities, grossness — *aavaran*, as he put it, removing it layer by layer, like peeling an onion. Take off the skin and go on peeling and peeling and peeling until what is left is nothing, and yet it was the onion. Like that we have to peel off layers and layers of ourselves, starting with the grossest ego to the subtlest ultimate ego, and then, as the French would say, "*Voila!*", that which was is not, but yet without this, that could not have been, therefore it is this that we have to un-become into.

So, Sahaj Marg is a process of un-becoming, we don't become anything, we don't get anything, we don't achieve

anything. We realise that when all is gone, yet something remains which partakes of the essence of nothingness. That is also the definition of divinity of God, therefore this and that are identical though this cannot be that. We can never become gods but we can be god-like in every feature of our existence or, if you would like to put it, non-existence existence. Babuji Maharaj was always fond of playing with words. For transmission he said 'forceless force'; and for this final stage he said 'non-being being' perhaps, or absolute being. It is being without existence. Now, existence is our role. We exist in time, we exist in space. But **that** being, the eternal being, transcends both space and time. Does God exist in time? Well, not as the Ultimate but as parts of itself, *amshas* of itself, which are supposed to exist in the heart of every created being — as it is said in the Gita. "*Hridayeshu sannivishtah.*"

So, if you want to seek divinity on earth, it has to be within your heart. There is no second opinion about this. In Hinduism we recognize only three works as fundamental to the Hindu religion: the sanatana dharma — I would rather not call it Hinduism but sanatana dharma, three pillars they are called, the *prasthanatraya*: the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. In there it is said, "I am in the heart of every created being. Look for me inside, find me, see me seated in the lotus of your heart. Bow before me, surrender to me, and leave the rest to me." "*Sarvadharman parityajya mam ekam sharanam vraja. Aham tva sarva papebhyo mokshayishyami maa shuchah.*"

So you see, then what are we doing in temples? Hinduism says this, your dharma says this, your Gita says this. But we listen to the Mahabharata. We see the serial over sixty-seven weeks. We buy saris which Draupadi wore on that picture. I mean, they are available in silk, they are available in cotton, and they are available in Vimal fabrics. The whole set of saris that Draupadi wore for the Mahabharata are available. This is all we do. What are we doing following that? In that serial you'll find Bhishma giving his *aashirvaad* [blessing] to

everybody with both hands raised. "*Dhirgaayushmaan bhava, Chiranjeevi bhava*, this bhava, that bhava," you see, and nothing works. Not one *aashirvada* of his came true. The mothers are blessing their sons. Ultimately, poor Gaandhari, she says, "What will I do with blessing?" When one son was left out of the hundred, and Duryodhana goes because he has to enter the war himself, and he says "Mother, bless me," she is unable to bless, because she knows right is on the side of the Pandavas. "It may be my son, but he is not right, he is not just. How can I bless him?"

So you see, blessings cannot be given even by the great, when we are not deserving of blessing. Therefore Babuji Maharaj said, "Be deserving." When we are deserving, we get everything. There is nothing to withhold, because Babuji Maharaj said, "I have came to give. If everything that has been given to me by Lalaji Maharaj, that is my work, it is my duty, it is my hope, it is my desire, it will be the satisfaction of my existence." But who was there to take what he had to give? I think that was a tragedy of his life and it will be the tragedy of every succeeding representative, because humanity doesn't change so easily. We would rather have fresh potato chips with *mirchi* and bread rather than realisation. We will say, "We are young; we are just married. *Dekha jayega*. [Let's see.] What is realisation? We will see. First let us go on our honeymoon." I mean, this is a common failure. I don't blame anybody; this is the human failure. Like I was discussing with Dr. Mukund and Jacky, who are both footloose and wandered over the face of the earth for some years or some months and tried to satisfy themselves that some divine purpose was being fulfilled by their footloose-ness. That is an age, that is a time, you see, that is the craziness of that age. But subsequent seeking to justify that craziness is wrong. "Yes, I was crazy. So what?" That's okay. We have all the right to be crazy.

I too have been crazy. One of my greatest crazinesses was accepting my Master, falling in love with him, being unable to leave him. My father repeatedly warned me when I

was made secretary of the Mission. He said, "Now you are going deeper and deeper into this *daldal*." You know what daldal is? Quicksand. He said, "One day that old man, you know, that wily old fellow, is going to dump this Mission on your shoulders and walk away." This my father told me, not once but many times. He said, "You are stupid; you are getting deeper and deeper into this." I said, "Why do you think so?" He said, "I don't see anybody else who can be his choice." And when Babuji Maharaj passed away, I brought out the nomination papers from the bank in which I had kept them. I made copies to take to Shahjahanpur; that was the time I showed it to my father, to my wife, to my son. My father had only to say, "What did I tell you!" But you know, good destiny cannot be avoided, as bad destiny cannot be avoided, too. It is only when we reach these positions which are so coveted by others, that we find that it is a stupid thing to have. It is crazy; it carries too much of a responsibility; it is a thankless job. Few people appreciate what you give. Even fewer appreciate what they can get, and even those who can get say, "So what? He got it from Babuji Maharaj. What is he doing wonderfully here?"

So, it is a thankless job and preceptors must be warned, because it is only a matter of degree, but their work will also be thankless. Never expect gratitude. He who gives and expects gratitude is a fool. He who gives and receives gratitude is in danger because he can think, "I am great. Look, everybody is thanking me." Therefore the need to remember the Master at every stage, remember that He is the giver — not you or me: that the thanks of the abhyasi are to be diverted to the Master, mentally, spiritually, with your heart. In that case you avoid the danger, otherwise you have adulation, you have praise, you have gratitude. They can go to your head worse than wine, and then we are sunk. Preceptors must remember this warning every morning once before they do their own sitting. "Not me but my Master is sitting here doing the work. Not me but He is giving the transmission. Not me but He is

doing the cleaning. It is His power which is working. All praise to Him, all glory to Him." Remember the advice which Babuji gave me which is written in *My Master*: if necessary, sit and think that there is a beard on your face, so that you can think the Master is sitting there and not you.

So you see, when we put the Master there, we are free of responsibility, we are free of the consequences of our efforts, we are free from the responsibility for producing results. This is true karma yoga, "*Maa phaleshu kadaachana* is this. *Karmanye va adhikaaraste, Maa phaleshu kadaachana*." Rightfully interpreted, it means, you do the work thinking that I am doing it. Then you have no right to the fruits of the work, means, you are... the first *mukti* I give you that you are liberated from the fruits of your efforts, the results of your efforts, because it is the results of our efforts that is always a big problem for us. It is a stumbling block over putting our best foot forward, to our expression, to our rightful use of our work, because we are afraid of the consequences.

A boy goes for an examination, the first thing he thinks of is failure. "What will I do if I fail?" He never thinks, "What will I do if I succeed?" This debilitates him, this makes him impotent. It removes him, robs him of half his powers immediately. A man wants to open a business says, "What if I fail?" He doesn't do business, he goes for service, earns 300 rand a month, retires on 350, and is miserable.

So you see, it is the idea of the fruit of your work that makes you impotent, that makes you cowards, and that makes you stay at home and say, "No, no, I am not really fit, let somebody else do it." I make bold to say that any individual who has the courage to say, "I shall be divine," cannot fail in that endeavour. Why? Because we are going about with rightness on our side, with justice on our side, with the true evolutionary goal on our side, the only goal to which as human beings we should aspire, for which we should work. Nature supports everything that we do then. My Master said,

"I am working for Nature. Nature therefore can only co-operate with me, with every one of my actions, and those who work for me will receive similar co-operation from Nature." What more do you want? What more do preceptors want?

So you see, the rewards for our service are unimaginable, stupendous. Even your imagination cannot foresee what you can get. But we are looking for petty rewards, first point to second point, to *brahmanda mandal*. What are these points and these *mandals*? I don't know. We have enough mandals in India, mandal commission. We should look only for that which is the highest. Anything less, I don't want. Can you be satisfied with half a father, or half a mother, or half a wife? No. So, why are you satisfied with less than half of the Master? Full or nothing, all or nothing, do and die, finished, you see. This I must achieve within this lifetime. Why? Because whatever religion may say about rebirth and *punar janma* and past *janma* [birth], we cannot count on anything like that. Also we cannot count on the next life being more propitious for our adventure in spirituality than this life. No businessman looks for the profit of his business in the next life, he looks for the business profit in this life, today.

Why do we look for it in the next life in spirituality? Because we don't value this. We say, "Money in the hand first. Let me build a bank balance, you know, one million rand; then let us see about spirituality." What happens by the time you have a million rand? If you are destined to have it, you have done so many mistakes, that you go and build a temple. You spend half your wealth in building temples, the other half of your wealth in feeding the poor, trying to buy the grace of God. It fails, because God cannot be cheated. He says, "What have you done that you build a temple to me? I don't need a temple." Why does God need a temple? Why does He need bronze and metal and gold and silver and your *sugandha* [fragrant] things, you know, like *chandan* [sandal paste] and whatnot, silks? He doesn't need. He is the creator of these things. It is like my buying a packet of biscuits and

taking it to Dr. Mukund when he is manufacturing the biscuits himself. He says, "Bhaisahib, I have got the biscuits ready for you, the whole range. You are only bringing me one packet and that, too, what I produced."

So, we have the temerity and the stupidity to offer to God what is already His. Even we are His, we are His creation. "No, no, sir, I surrender." God can very well say, "What is it that you are surrendering which is not already mine? Do you think you could exist apart from me? Can this world exist apart from me? Do you think this universe could exist apart from me? I created the universe, I created your world, and then I created you, so that you may live in it and come back to Me. But you are foolish. You say, 'God, take me.' Who is this 'me' who is coming to Me?"

There is a story about a young fellow who went to a guru to be his disciple, and knocked on his door. The guru said, "Who is there?" He said, "It is I." He said, "When I am dead, you come to me." The poor fellow was bewildered. He said, "How can I come back when I am dead? This guru must be stupid." What the guru meant was when **'I'** is dead, the ego is dead, come back to me. So, what we surrender is really the ego. We say, "I thought I am I, but now I know I am you, or better still, you are me. Let me therefore surrender this false notion of my separate existence, that I am something great, that I can worship you, that I can create temples to your glory, that I can sing your praise, when the faculties to do things are also given by you."

So you see, we have to surrender the result, to surrender the effort — finally we have to surrender ourselves. So, Sahaj Marg is a very glorious revival of an ancient tradition, as you know, it is supposed to have existed seventy generations before Raja Dasharatha, then it went into limbo, because India has always been cursed with a population stupid enough to fight within itself, have multiple religions quarrelling with themselves, go to temples when the reality is there as a living

thing. Therefore we have been fighting and losing, and fighting and losing. We have been playing hide and seek with our spiritual goals, with our spiritual practice, satisfying ourselves with stupid rituals which may look good to others, but we know in our hearts that they are crazy things to do, yet we do it because we have no alternative. But now there is an alternative. There is not merely an alternative, it is not merely a viable alternative, it is a transcendentally superior alternative. It is the only alternative available. Don't think by changing the temple, by going to a Jain temple instead of a Hindu temple, or to a Christian church, you are going to change. It is like changing barbershops, a little less cut or a little more cut doesn't change your face, and you cannot change your face.

I was reading the other day that in Johannesburg, some famous, what do you call them, cosmetic surgeons, plastic surgeons, have been making a lot of money leaving more scars on the faces of these young girls than they went with before. They're increasing the number of scars, and making money! This is what religion does. It makes us feel as if we are more simple than we are, or more sanctimonious than we should be, or more worthy than we ever were or, the ultimate disgrace, that, "I am a pious person." If every temple-goer were a pious person, this world should not be so full of so much impiety, and sin and wrongdoing.

Sahaj Marg has no concept of sin and virtue. That also I think Govindbhai spoke about the other day. Every action leaves an impression, every thought leaves an impression. It is not a question of good or bad. As Babuji Maharaj said, "Good samskara will bring you back, perhaps as a king, perhaps as a multimillionaire. What you call bad samskara may bring you here as a leper, a beggar, a diseased person, but both bring you back here — only the conditions change. So, don't create samskara." How not to create samskara? Remain in constant remembrance. When you are in constant remembrance, you do things without creating impressions; therefore they have no

effect upon you. Again, karma yoga, *maa phaleshu kadaachana* in a different sense. "If you do it in constant remembrance of myself," says the Master, "your actions, your thoughts will no longer affect you, they become mine."

So you see, how many profound interpretations of that Gita are possible which our three great *acharyas* have not understood at all? Shankaracharya, Madhvacharya, Ramanujacharya from whose *parampara* I come. They have not understood these things. They could only say, "Work without salary." How could anybody work without a salary? So, the real thing is, as it says in another place, "*Dhyanaat karmaphala tyaagah tyaagaat shantir anantharam.*" "When you meditate, the results of your actions and your thoughts are given away by you. That brings you endless eternal peace."

So, it is by giving away what we have that we find peace. What is it that we have to give away? Our samskaras. When they are cleaned off — that is why in a sitting in which cleaning is correctly done, you feel lighter. It is wrong to think that this transmission is good. Transmission is never good, it is never bad — it is transmission. But when your cleaning is done, at deeper and deeper levels, you find a profound peace, you can go into *samadhi*, without the transmission having anything to do with it. The transmission is the inputting of Master's grace and his personal spiritual essence into us. It is always the same. But it is like milk — put in a kerosene vessel, it will immediately curdle. Clean the vessel, the milk remains.

So you see, it is the cleaning which is most important, Govindbhai emphasized that, too. I believe that cleaning is the crux of the whole matter. It is more important than transmission, because what is the use of transmission if there is no cleaning? As Babuji said, "If you transmit to a criminal without cleaning him, he will make a better criminal. Transmit more to him, you will make him a perfect criminal." That is not the aim of Sahaj Marg. So, cleaning is most important.

Remember, in your own personal sadhana you have to do cleaning every day. Don't neglect it.

Preceptors must only do cleaning. Babuji Maharaj has written me a letter, "In general, for preceptors, their duty is only to do the cleaning." So, that we must understand: preceptors duty is not to elevate — they cannot elevate. Elevation is the Master's business. We just clean, prepare the ground, and then He works. So, this is our work, you see.

Like even in meditation, Babuji said, "What do you do really in meditation?" Clean yourself, clean your heart, and sit patiently waiting for Him. When his Grace will descend, that is His business. We cannot command it, we cannot regulate it, we cannot order it. It will come at its time. Our business is to be clean, to be receptive, and to be patient.

You have been sitting clean, perceptive, and patient, I think, more or less it is lunch time. Is it ready? It is. Shall I finish or should I continue for ten to fifteen minutes more?

So, that is the importance of cleaning. Please don't neglect it. You may even neglect meditation — I am not giving you permission to neglect meditation, but you may even neglect it — but not the cleaning. Because if you wish to sleep peacefully, that cleaning of the evening is the thing which will ensure that you have got rid of your day's samskaric accumulation and you can go to bed with a light heart. Your daily cleaning takes care of your daily samskara accumulation, samskaric accumulation. The preceptor's work, the Master's work is supposed to rid you of your past samskaras.

I remember a story of a boy who was in Coimbatore, developing very well, a new abhyasi, hardly four, five months, developing extraordinarily well and I had intended that I should recommend him to Babuji Maharaj to be made a preceptor for that centre, because at that time we had no preceptor there. Something happened; he went to Bangalore, felt sick, acute stomach pain, came back, and died. I wrote to

Master. I was very sorry about it, and he wrote to me, "I see the soul sitting in a corner, in darkness, weeping. Had he but lived a couple of months more and done his sadhana properly, he would have qualified for liberation. As it is, he has to take one more life." You see the difference? One or two months of sadhana and he would have qualified for liberation. But *duradrishtavasaat*, as we say, unfortunately fate intervened, destiny intervened, proving Babuji's repeated sayings that *"Zindagi aur maut ishvar ki haatme hai."* ["Life and death are in God's hands."] That being so, we have to be very alert that we do not miss this opportunity, thinking we can do it tomorrow, because for any one of us here, tomorrow may not come. Tomorrow is something which need not come, which may not come, we should not bank upon that. Therefore, Sahaj Marg says, "Here and now."

So you see, the need to understand the immediacy of the whole spiritual purpose, the purpose of spiritual practice, the need to do it now, now, now, now — always. Spirituality is not for the future, it is for the present. Sanatana dharma speaks of an eternal present; it does not speak of a past and a future. The eternal must be in the present or it is nowhere. Eternity is not an extension of time backwards and forwards into a long past and an ever-increasing future. That is a serial conception of time, that is a Western thought. To our minds, the Eastern mind, the Indian mind, especially to the genius of our Indian mind, eternity is here and now. Eternity is not in the future, it was never in the past, because I would have achieved it. For me, it is now. If I am not in the eternal now, I am never going to be in the eternal.

Therefore, make up your minds to do it **now, here**. This is the message of spirituality, this is the exhortation of spirituality. This is the caution of the Master. "Beware. This abhyasi passed away when, if he had but meditated two months more, he would have qualified for *mukti*." I told you the other story of an abhyasi, of a boy who came to Babuji Maharaj already in the fourth point, showing that he must have

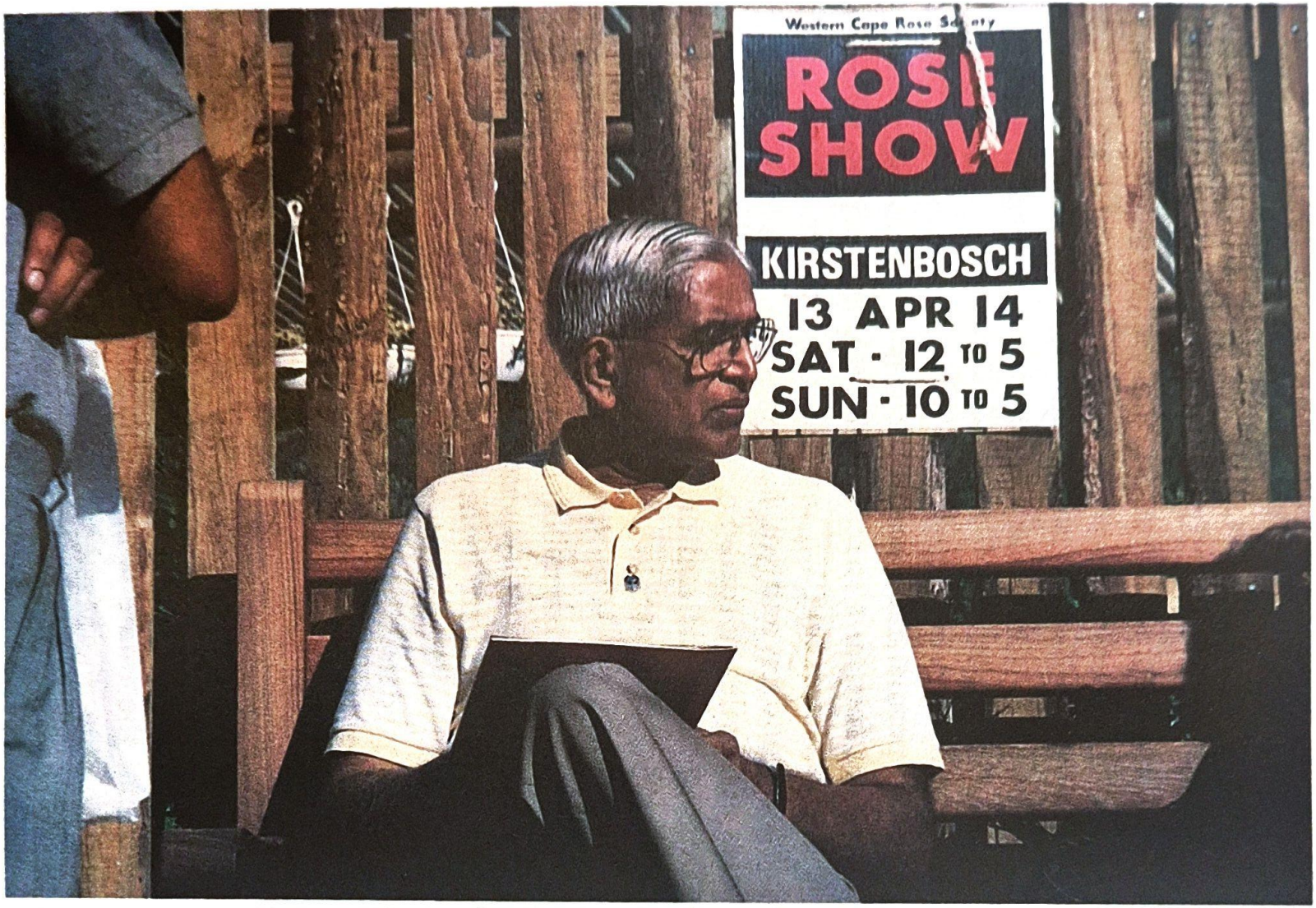
done thousands of years of preparatory sadhana in past lives, yet he came once to Babuji and never came again. And when I asked Babuji, "Why, when you are there?" He said, "Samskara." So remember this, from this story it is clear that you can be highly evolved and yet your samskaras can play havoc with your spiritual progress.

Remember what Babuji Maharaj has written in volume two of his autobiography, that only from the state of *Mahaparishad* there is no fall. At every other stage up to but not including Mahaparishad, there is the possibility of fall. That is the craziness of the mind. We can always be diverted of our purpose. We think it is a temporary diversion, but it may be a permanent diversion. You notice sometimes you take the wrong fork in a road, thinking that there will be a branch off somewhere, and we can turn off and then you find it is going on and on and you have to return. You have to retrace miles and miles of road. So, you have wasted double time, one in losing that road and one in coming back again. You will never lose one year, you lose two years every time you lose one year.

So, please remember that time lost is time eternally lost. It is the only commodity which you cannot remake. Health can be lost and regained, money can be lost and regained, power can be lost and regained, positions can be lost and regained, possessions can be lost and regained, but time lost is lost forever. So, let us not put off until tomorrow what we can do today. Let us not put off to the next hour what should be done now.

So, I pray to my Master to grant you all the blessing of this wisdom, that spirituality is a matter of the here and the now, that the future is here with us now, that eternity is here with us now, the Master is here with us now, whether we are able to see Him or not. May He bless us.

Thank you.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BEYOND DEATH

Benoni, South Africa
April 22, 1991

I will be speaking of this and that, not exactly about Sahaj Marg. And the first thing I would like to say is, I used to work in a company and I used to travel a lot. One day, I came down (I had to go to work), and then I was supposed to be going on my travels by car. My driver brought down my stuff and put it in the boot of the car. I came downstairs, and I was just about to get into the car when my boss came. And he asked me a funny question. He asked, "Are you going on work or are you going on a holiday?" For a moment I was nonplussed, but then I realised that this same question we should ask every time a person dies. "Where is this guy going — is he going on work or is he going on a holiday?" And because we don't know it, we have all these pious sentiments — you know, when people die we put their photographs and "Gone but not forgotten...", etc.

So, this is why the problem of death looms so large in front of us. Precisely because we don't know where someone is going when they die. When they are born, we know where they are coming. We assume it is to a good life, into a good family. "Hopefully he will be rich, successful, marry well, and

go on and on happily forever after." As they say in the fairy tales, "They lived happily forever after." But this 'ever after' doesn't come in this life. It is the proper ending only in fairy tales. In our lives we don't see the 'ever after' part of it. Spirituality deals with the 'ever after'. We call it the hereafter; it could as well be the everafter. So, what happens after death is very properly the subject of spirituality — it concerns the subject of spirituality.

Looked at in another way, sensuality deals with the senses, sexuality deals with sex, spirituality deals with the soul. You can call it the science of the soul. A sensual person is one whose senses are always awake. You can say a spiritual person is one whose soul has been awakened. So, spirituality is also the science of awakening of the soul. Awakening from what? Because, according to the ancient science of the Vedanta and the Upanishad, the soul is eternal. It is never created, it never dies, but it seems to suffer from a some sort of *sushupti*, as we say, a sleeping state. Because the Vedas themselves say, "Arise, awake, and rest not till the goal is achieved." It was one of the famous quotations to which Vivekananda referred again and again. "Arise!"

Even in the West we have this famous symbolism of the sleeper who wakes up. Our sleeping and waking up is only the sleep of the body. It follows a diurnal circle dependent on the rotation of the earth. Night followed by day, followed by night. Day apportioned to work, night apportioned to rest and recuperation, when we have to recover our spent energies, recharge our batteries, as they say nowadays. That is only like the car battery running down and being recharged, or petrol being filled up in the tank. What is it that must happen, you see, because otherwise we are leading the life of an automaton, a robot. Modern technology speaks of robots everywhere, in factories predominantly. They are designed to perform a function; they go on performing it almost *ad infinitum* until they break down. We are, in a sense, similar robots. We are also going on performing routinely,

frustratingly, soul-killingly, until we break down. The moneyman goes on making money; he doesn't know why — very much like a chicken which goes on laying eggs — it doesn't know why either. Or, like a repetitive machine producing repetitive parts about which it knows nothing.

In that sense, if you look at spirituality, spirituality can be said to be, or spoken about, as the subject of the whole, not of the part. So, spirituality properly concerns a person's expansion of consciousness until he is conscious of the whole, which means the whole taken in a cosmic, super-cosmic, universal sense. It is no longer dealing with men and matters, it is no longer dealing with money, it is no longer dealing with oil and natural gas. It is no longer dealing with anything *per se*. Spirituality cannot be the subject of things. It cannot be history; it cannot be geography; it cannot be atomic science; it cannot even be love, though love plays a very large part in spirituality. Now, under the modern educational trends, where we think of a whole as composed of parts, we would tend to argue that, "Well, why not, gold mining is as much a part of spirituality as gold mining or diamond mining. Gold, gold, diamonds." We can argue that gold and diamond are the same substance — carbon. But you wouldn't buy a ten-carat bit of gold.

So, that is a way of arguing from this idea — that the whole is and must be composed of parts. It will be as silly to think of this spirituality as being composed of parts as you would consider a human being as being composed of his skeleton and his nerves and his muscles and his organs. They are there, no doubt, but that is not the man. The man or the human being is something which transcends this concatenation of things, systems, sub-systems, into a whole which transcends the sum of its parts. So, you cannot say a man is made up of a heart and two lungs and kidneys and the stomach and intestines. They are part of him, but he is not **of** them. When we can realise this, then for us death would lose for us much of its terror; birth would lose much of its joy. Because there is

something which transcends this bodily organization, organism, which seems to come in with birth — or sometimes prior to that, we don't know when exactly, though in our system we have a certain belief about it — and which seems to go out, leaving just a body made up of systems, sub-systems, organs, etc.

This is what spirituality essentially deals with: the soul, the spirit, whatever you may call it. When we see children being born we are very happy. We never wonder where that child comes from. Science says, "Well, it was conceived." Conceived from where? Conceived out of what? Science gives answers to both of these: conception as a subject of cellular biology, for instance. But why? If you could, for instance, fertilize an egg in your laboratories, could you make life out of it? They are trying very hard, I believe in the cellular biology laboratories all over the world to create life, but they don't create life. Why do they want to create life? To prove that life is also part of science. And science has very improperly, shall we say, taken control over what we call life. Science would like very much to take anything and everything under its control. But it is not so easily dismissed. Even the scientist wonders where this life comes from. More importantly, because this is a matter for joy, we never think about it — which is another subject, that when we are joyful we don't think.

Therefore, joy is shunned by spiritual people, by saints, by sages, as something which is not conducive to life, which is not conducive to proper thought, which is not conducive to spiritual elevation. It keeps you down here — joy. So, when children are born in that joy of the moment, we don't ask these questions. "Where does this child come from?" When children ask then we say, "You are out of the mother's stomach." "But what put you there?" When the child is old enough to ask, we say, "The stork brought this baby," under the assumption that sex is a dirty subject, childbearing is a dirty subject, about which children should not know.

So, children don't know, parents don't know, nobody bothers. But when death faces us and when we are going to lose a loved one, then we start wondering, "What is going to happen? Where is this person going? What is it that leaves the body when it lies dead?" And it hurts us. It hurts us in a very particular way because we know, in our heart of hearts, we are going to face that situation in the future. That is why, perhaps, spirituality becomes the subject of the senile older people, who go to spirituality out of fear, not out of a search for knowledge, but out of fear. They want to know, "What is going to happen to me?" Therefore, joy says, "Oh, death to me, it is not going to come for a long, long, time, Dad. I'm only twelve, I'm only fourteen, I'm only eighteen, I'm only fifty." The optimism of the living where death is concerned is something which is a joke.

There is a question in the Mahabharat, where Dharmaputra goes to get water after his brothers are dead. And there is this Yaksha who is waiting to ask questions. And the final question, according to the Mahabharata, is, "What is the greatest mystery on earth?" And Dharmaputra Yudhishthira says, "It is this: that seeing everybody die, we never think we are going to die ourselves." I have seen old people of eighty saying, "No, no, I will still live for some years. There is no hurry to make my will. Get me some *chikki* and *murukku*," you know, hard stuff which even we cannot bite. They would rather powder it and swallow it than give it up.

So you see, death is a thing which transfixes us at certain moments, which entices us to study it, which frightens us and keeps us away from studying it, which bothers us right through life. There is no living human being who is not afraid of death. Therefore, properly, spirituality can be considered to be the study of death itself. Not thanatology as the Greeks knew it: what happens after death, the clinical symptoms surrounding death, the post-mortem experiences, so-called. That is not spirituality. What really happens — like the young fellow Nachiketas.

You all know the story of Nachiketas. It comes in the Upanishads. His father was performing a particular *yajna* [sacrifice] where he had to give away everything that he possessed. He starts off by giving away his lame cows, the cows which had gone dry and would no longer yield milk. And like this, you know, useless things. And the son keeps asking him, "Father, to whom are you going to give me?" He asks once. After some time he asks again. Third time, when he asks the father gets annoyed, and says, "I give you to death." Now, the boy is very sensitive. His father has given him away. So, he goes to the land of the kingdom of the Lord of Death. Yama, the Lord of Death, is missing. He has gone away on tour, presumably to catch some souls, perhaps. And this boy waits patiently for three days and three nights, at the end of which Yama comes back.

Now, Nachiketas is a Brahmin boy, he has been waiting — the courtesy of those days. Yama had to bow before him respectfully, beg his pardon for keeping him waiting, wash his feet, and then he says, "You have waited for me three days and nights. I will give you one boon for each day which you have waited here." Three boons. One is that his father's anger should disappear. The second is something to do with a particular *yajna* which Lord Yama reveals to him. The third question is, "What happens after death?" Yama says, "You are too young to ask this question. Ask me something else. Ask me for jewels, for playthings, for toys, divine toys." He says, "No, no. Those things don't attract me. What happens after death?" He says, "Even the great sages do not know about this. Even Indra in his Indra Loka does not know this."

He says, "All the more reason why I should know about it! If they don't know it, I would like to know it." He says, "My son, even the gods don't know it." He says, "Lord, therefore I want to know it. That which is not known to the *devas* and the Lords and Indra himself — that I would like to know." Yama then comes to try and tempt Nachiketas. He says, "Well, I will give you dominion over this earth. You

shall see the grandchildren of your grandchildren of your grandchildren living before you. I will give you immeasurable wealth. The divine damsels of Indra Loka will be at your disposal. Are you happy?" He says, "No. After all this, will I die?" He says, "Yes. You may see the grandchildren of your grandchildren of your grandchildren but yet you have to die." He says, "Then what is the use of all this? If I am to die then I might as well die now and know what is after death."

Then it is said, you know, Yama reveals to him the secret of death but it is not revealed in the Upanishad, which shows that death and after death, the spiritual state, cannot be a subject of knowledge. If it was, it would have been in our books. We could have degrees in thanatology, PhDs, and be very happy that, "I know what I am going to do after death, perhaps book a hotel room there, reserve a train," you see — all sorts of these funny things that we do in modern life. Everything is reserved nowadays. Even before a child is born you have to reserve in school. And I'm told in some places burial is so expensive, and places not available, that a child is born and they already reserve a burial site, too. So, on one side the school, on the other side the burial site — in between I'm stuck, you see.

So, this condition of post-mortem existence — if it exists — is what spirituality is about. Why post-mortem? Because when we are alive, we don't bother about it. Otherwise, it should actually be a subject of our present day existence. Wise people say, "Try to know it now. If you know about death before you die, then you have mastered death." It is like a job. You prepare yourself for the job before you enter the job. You study medicine before you become a doctor. Isn't it? You don't become a doctor after killing several patients and learning medicine in the process. In all fields of knowledge and knowledge-based activities, preparation comes first, understanding comes later, which gives experience, which gives knowledge.

Every doctor knows that what he did on the cadaver in his classes he cannot do on a living body. There you could, perhaps, even strike a knife like this and pull like this, like a butcher, you know, just because you want to open up the thing. But on a living human being you don't do that sort of thing. You have to go about it delicately, gently. In a cadaver you can break blood vessels merrily; in a living person you cannot. You can cut through nerves in a cadaver, but you cannot do it in a living body. So, the real knowledge of what a doctor is supposed to do, a surgeon is supposed to do, comes with the practise, during the practice of medicine after he has acquired the knowledge.

My Master Babuji Maharaj, Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, says, "Die before you die." Now, this sounds rather funny, doesn't it? 'Groovy', as the Americans would say. "Die before I die, but I don't want to die at all. And you are telling me to die now. Well, perhaps I have fifty years more to live." Sounds crazy. I thought so, too. I thought, "Why is this old man trying to entice me?" Because we have many systems, you know, in various countries where people have been made to die. What happened after death, perhaps even that guru of that system doesn't know. So, when I understood this, that in other systems people have been made to die without the guru himself knowing what is happening after death, I asked my Master one question: "Have you died before you died?" He said, "I am still alive, but I am also dead." I said, "To what?" He said, "To everything that is not of God."

So you see, dying before dying does not mean a mortal death and having our bodies embalmed or burned or buried. It means dying to all that is not divine. It means awakening the divine consciousness, living in that consciousness. It is very much like a movie. You watch a movie and during the period of that movie you are totally engrossed. Sometimes it is raining outside, there is thunder and lightning, you don't know. When the movie finishes, suddenly you look up and

say, "Aha, it has been raining!" You didn't know about it. That is the state which spirituality says you must achieve by accepting. Die to this world, become alive to the other world, which you call after-death world, but which is not really an after-death world, it is mingled with this existence of ours. Very much like you put a glass of perfume there and a bit of cow dung here, and you find both the perfumes or scents merging with each other and producing a blend which may be foul or sweet depending on your taste.

So, the secret of spirituality is: if I learn to accept the fact that I must die to this life and then only find the after life which exists **now here**, which cannot be sought **after** death, because after death I have no powers of seeking, I have no knowledge, my consciousness is finished. Perhaps I'm afraid if I'm still there. Because many systems of thought, of yoga, speak of the fact that when the soul passes out of this body, in this act of transition, as they call it, it is bewildered. It is there, but nobody can intercommunicate with it, nobody can see it. Many occultists have spoken of this fact, that when a soul leaves the body, it is there, it doesn't know where to go. It sees its body lying and it doesn't know what to do. It tries to re-enter it but it cannot re-enter because the connection has been cut forever. It tries to speak to its wife or husband or its children — it cannot. It is making the motions, but they don't understand because they don't see it, they don't hear it. Then how will it communicate?

So, in that state of bewildered frustration and fear, that soul sits weeping somewhere. This is the normal condition of a departed soul, depending on its grossness, as we call it, how much it has been impressed by the thoughts and actions of this life. The grosser souls are in a sort of a stupor, you see, from which they may not wake up at all. The brighter souls, they are able to find their way, because after a momentary aberration, fear, not knowing where to go, what to do, in some way, you see, their, what should I say, their consciousness (it is not really consciousness but an awareness, perhaps) is

reactivated and they are able to go towards the goal which they see now more clearly than they did here.

Spirituality says: make this awakening of the soul **now**. Why wait till after you are dead, when you have no assistance? Who is going to do it — whether there is going to be somebody at all? It is facile to speak of a god waiting for you on the other side, or your departed father or mother waiting for you on the other side. Who knows? It is not as if I am going to get off a train or a bus and wait for somebody to pick me up. Sometimes even that fails.

You know, the first time I went to the U.S. with my Master, when he was seventy-three, we landed up in Detroit, and one girl was supposed to meet us and take us from there to, I don't know, 150 miles away, to another place where we had a meditation camp. He and I were waiting. Nobody was there, we didn't know where to go, what to do. The only thing was to wait. And wait we did. I waited patiently because my Master was there. I had him to depend upon. Later on he told me, "You know, I would not have been able to wait so patiently had you not been there." It was a very strange thing coming from my Master himself, which shows a certain interdependence between the Master and the disciple. He depends on me, I depend upon him. He depends on me for certain things, I depend on him for certain things.

But, be that as it may, coming to a new place, coming down from the plane, waiting at the airport without knowing where to go, what to do, because the person who was supposed to meet you is not there, is so frustrating. How can you be sure of somebody meeting you after death — when there has been no preplanning, there has been no appointment, there has been no time fixed for it, because you do not know when you are going to die.

So, spirituality says, "Make that programme **now**!" With whom? Not with my father, because I may die before him and it would be stupid to make a programme with my father. "Dad,

you meet me there on the other side." And he says, "Well, my son, suppose you get there first, will you meet me there first?" And it's crazy; the whole thing becomes crazy. So, with whom should we make this tryst, this tryst of destiny, with whom shall we make it? Obviously, with one who is always there, who is always here, who is always everywhere. Therefore he doesn't have to come or to go, he doesn't have to die to be there, he doesn't have to be alive to be there because he is everything, all at the same time throughout the universe.

This is the idea of awakening the soul to the existence of the divine consciousness within ourselves as that spark of divinity about which the Veda speaks, which says especially in, I think, the Purusha Sukta, that He exists as an atomic flame and it is pointing upwards. And the flame is not like the normal flame with the blue inside and the yellow outside, but it has the yellow inside and the blue outside. The Purusha Sukta speaks very vividly of this and it says, "In the heart of that tiny atomic flame the ultimate consciousness resides."

So you see, we don't have to seek God, we don't have to look for Him and then make up a tryst with Him. We have to contact Him **here** within us — which is why we meditate. What is the logic of meditation many people ask us? It is precisely this, that if I look for Him outside, first of all I don't know where to look, I don't know what to look for, I do not know when to look for Him. The place, the time and the person. There used to be a picture in my young age, "The time, the place and the girl," you see, which made us realise that even to go and have a love affair with someone, all the three had to be fixed. You must know the girl, you must know where to meet her and when, otherwise your affair falls flat. Here it is the time, the place, and the person. I don't know the person. Not knowing him, I cannot fix the place and the time. But spirituality says, "My friend, He is **here**. The place is within you, the time, any time you choose — **now,** preferably." Isn't it?

So, the time, the place, the person — all are in me, which means, in a sense, that if I could contact Him, I have been, shall we say, liberated from the concept or the bondage of time and place. Two dimensions of existence which bothers all the time. Time and space, to put place in another way. Knowledge of His presence, consciousness of His presence, my ability to contact Him and establish my association with Him, I won't say on a permanent footing, because once it is done it is permanent. You don't light a fire permanently. You light a matchstick and if the fire catches, it is lit. It is permanent in the sense that you have lit it once, it is permanent. In the same sense, when you light this connection between you and your inner Self in which the *paramatman* resides, the ultimate consciousness resides, you establish instantly a permanent connection.

As I said, time and space have lost their meaning because He is there now, He is there within me, I am here and now. His here and now matches my here and now. It is like two gears meshing — it doesn't matter how many teeth this has or how many teeth this has, that is a matter of engineering. Both are rotating together, in sync, as they say.

So, spirituality says, "If you look outside, what are you going to see? Do you know what He looks like? Is it a he or a she or an it? Even that you don't know." Because some religions speak of God as male, some of them speak of it as female. When it is male, the female calls us male chauvinists, sometimes they add a third letter, 'P', to it: Male Chauvinist Pig. Otherwise, like in Hinduism we talk of both — there are gods and goddesses. Now, which of these gods shall I apply to? Because, there again, it is frightening. You have the first three as the triumvirate. One only creates, one only looks after, the third only destroys.

I am already here; obviously, there is no use going to my creator to create me all over again. What will I create of you with me when he has created me? Can your son come and say

to you, "My father, please give me birth all over again."? He cannot. It would be as crazy to apply to Brahma. Vishnu the protector? Yes, he protects me, but what about death? The Lord of Death is waiting there, you see. Shiva, the destroyer. Some people say, "If I pray to Shiva, he is the Lord of Death. The only boon he can grant me is to give me a quick death. What can the Lord of Death give you except death itself? What can Kubera give you except wealth? What can Saraswati give you except knowledge? Lakshmi, wealth.

So, they have become compartmentalized, and you cannot apply to all of them. It is like a man trying to buy all the lottery tickets so that he is sure of a win but he finds that he has invested about two hundred thousand times more than the prize he is going to get. So, obviously you cannot apply to all the gods. It is like a man who doesn't know how to play the piano saying, "If I strike all the chords together some music will come out of it." There will only be discordance. Or, like a homeopath saying, "I don't know whether I should use *belladonna* or *calendula* or *nux vomica*. Let me take all the medicines in the chest." There can be no hit and miss run in spirituality. I must know the person first.

What do I find when I go to temples, or whatever it is, places to worship? Only representations. And do I know whether it is the truth? Because sensible people say, "Well this idol of Krishna doesn't match this idol of Krishna." One is a fellow with a moustache driving a chariot for a fellow sitting behind him wielding a bow and an arrow. He's a driver. How should I apply to a driver? "Oh, but in the Gita it is said, Parthasarathi, he was driving Arjuna in that." Yes, but why should a lord, the god of the cosmic realm drive somebody's chariot? "Oh, he loved him so much." But that Krishna is a child, sucking his big toe, lying on a leaf. "Yes, that is the ultimate cosmic form, when dissolution or *pralaya* is to take place." Then there will be dissolution.

Some people say, "Well, you know, the portrait of Lakshmi, it is beautiful. I mean, if she was alive I would probably fall in love with her and marry her." But is she a goddess? How do I know? Well, some artist paints a picture; it looks nice, but is it a goddess? Has he seen the goddess before he painted her? You know, even the best painters cannot paint you properly. How could this fellow paint a Lakshmi or a Saraswati or Maha Kali? So, we are left with mere representations. It is finding the signature of the girl you are going to marry and being asked to make a choice. "Yes dad, the signature is nice, but could I see the girl please?" Of course you want to see the girl, you don't want to see her signature. If she is rich, you would like to see her signature on cheques later on when you are married to her, but not before marriage.

So, we are left with mere representations or perhaps imaginations of what people thought were god and goddesses. Therefore, worship outside yourself is frustrating. You don't know where to look, what to look for, how to look. Having found that, should I keep it or not? Therefore, we say, "Well the best thing is to leave an offering and walk out, hoping that he will bless me." Hoping that he will bless me — there is no surety. It is a pious hope, shall we say a desperate hope, that I have come so far, Lord take one step towards me.

I had a boss with whom I used to travel a lot by car. He was in conventional trousers and the managerial executive class dress, but he always had a dhoti around him in the car and loose sandals which he could kick off. We used to travel hundreds of miles together. He would see a temple, and he would quickly wrap the dhoti around himself and bow to it. Fifty miles later there would be a church, again he would put on the *dhoti* and bow before it. Twenty miles later, this side a mosque, again he would repeat this. I said, "Boss what are you doing? You are bowing to everything that you are seeing." He said, "My friend, who knows which is the real god? If I pray to all of them surely the real one will come to my rescue."

This is our attitude to religion. I mean, my boss did it openly, he couldn't care less whether anybody was critical. But we are doing it covertly, pretending to be worshippers in temples, going to churches to be baptised, to be blessed, to be buried subsequently, not knowing what we are doing. The ignorance that is associated with religious practice is absolutely appalling, absolutely appalling. What keeps it alive? Two things. The consciousness of our guilt, wrong thoughts, wrong actions of which we are ashamed, of which we are afraid, and the hope of the hereafter. As my Master said, "Religion has two instruments: fear and temptation." And religion uses it very wisely.

Every priest in every temple does it. "Oh, what is happening in your house? Your child is falling sick again and again? Why don't you do a small *prayaschitta*?" "How much will it cost?" "Well, you know, five hundred and one." And if you look a little relaxed he says, "It can also be done five thousand one, you know, it's more effective. I will also give you a *kavacha* [amulet] to wear here. Copper will cost two thousand, silver can cost four thousand, but you are a saint, ten thousand and we'll make it of gold." This ten thousand is an addition. And we poor fools, idiots, we think by paying more and more we are going to buy greater blessings of God, as if God is to be bought, as if God is to be bribed! "*Mane kari apo, saheb*." ["Do it for me, sir."] "How much?" "Ten thousand." "*Chaalse*." [Okay.] Now the priest has got you hooked. One prayaschitta he has done, you have spent fifteen, eighteen thousand rupees, naturally you have to invite all your society people to come and look at the glorious thing that you are doing, the *havan*, the *homa* [ritual offering with fire], the mantras and the tantras, and you have to be fed afterwards, another five thousand rupees down the drain. Six months later you call him and say, "Panditji, boy is still like that." "No, no, you see, I knew. I knew this was not enough. We ignore Kali. "*Arre!* Why didn't you tell me then?" "No, no, but you see,

the divine mother, we cannot forget her ever. So now I suggest a *homa* of propitiation."

And this goes on, you see, and we are losing hope, but as we lose hope we are willing to spend more and more. This is a funny thing. When we really hope we spend less. When we lose hope, we spend more. When we are totally desperate, we are willing to spend everything we have on that priest and on his temple.

Spirituality says, and Master said this so often, "Your destiny cannot be changed even by God himself." This is not atheism, we are not denying the existence of God, we are not denying His omnipotence, His omnipresence. We are only saying that in your destiny He cannot interfere. Why? Because God created us free, He gave us intelligence, that which nothing else on earth possesses, will power and intelligence He has given us. He expects us to use these things to guide our way through what we call the *samsara* of life, the ocean of life. But we don't use both of them. When intelligence tells us this you should do and this not, will power fails. Will power is strong in the very things we should not attempt or do.

So, we have this funny situation, that the two God-given gifts which, I repeat, nothing in nature has possessed, we possess, and we misuse them. God says, "Well, what can I do?" It is like you give a captain of a ship a bunker full of oil, his rudder, and the running engines, and a compass to guide him by, but he doesn't use the compass. He says, "No, no, that, you see, that is England." And it turns out to be a cloud. "No, no," he says, "turn ten points to the starboard or larboard or whatever it is, that leads to England." And you go and hit a big iceberg, for instance. "But captain, why don't you use the compass?" "No, no, I know what I am doing. I am a master navigator for the last twenty-five years." Wonderful.

Similarly, we have human beings saying, "I know what I am doing. No, no, I am a multimillionaire, I am a professor, I am the best doctor in town, I am a psychiatrist." And out

comes somebody in white from a church and saying, "I am the parishioner of this parish's priest. Let me attend to you." The only thing they can do properly is to bury you, all of them. The moneyed man buries you with money, the knowledgeable man buries you in his knowledge, the priest buries you sanctimoniously with false promises of a heaven of which he has no knowledge, because he is still living here, and his hypocrisy is going to make sure that he will not even have the grave that you have. But we go to these people, spending more and more money, spending more and more time, the greater the frustration, the greater the disappointment, the greater the despair.

All our money, our energy, our effort is channelled to this stupid thing which is called external worship in spirituality. External worship has no meaning. If it could have been done so easily, long ago this world would have been devoid of its population, everybody would have been liberated, because we have been doing it for thousands of years. Churches have been existing for what eighteen, nineteen hundred years, temples for longer, and what is the result? We only see more of them coming up. It is like in a society where more and more hospitals are coming up, and you say the health of this nation is improving. Where we had only one bed per thousand population, we now have one bed per hundred population. In ten years time we hope to have one bed per head of population and that is supposed to be advancement, that is supposed to be growth and civilized society. We have the best hospitals in town, we have the best malls in town, we have the best graveyards in town, beautiful sculptured gardens, lawns, flowers — every damn thing growing there, and beautiful marble stones under which we lie dead.

So you see, spirituality says if you die now, you are not going through this paraphernalia, not of burial, nôt of being cremated, not of being in any way beaten up and powdered and thrown into the air like the Tibetans do. You will die in

your body, to your body, awakening to the inner consciousness of the Divine which is you in your heart; therefore you transcend death.

So you see, spirituality is a very potent subject, and when spirituality talks of dying before you die, it does not mean suicide. It does not mean bodily death. It means a dissociation of your conscious endeavours from this life to a hereafter life. What am I in my essence? What is it that moves me, which makes me weep on occasion, which makes me laugh many times? What is **it**? **That** I want to find out.

You see, like when you give children a toy, some of the more precocious ones break it up into pieces because they want to know how it works. They are not interested in seeing it working, they want to know how it works. Perhaps they are the future geniuses of science and technology, of engineering. But we don't have that intelligence. We are happy that our life is going on, the money is coming in and going out, food is coming in and going out, happiness is coming in and going out, sorrow is coming in and fortunately going out, until it stops with us. It is like a motorist in India, you know, he passes all these gates on the railway, what we call level crossings, suddenly just as he is going to pass through, one knocks him on the head and he says, "What happened? Everything was passing through, suddenly it has stopped with me." Literally now he is holding the ball in his hand.

"The buck stops here," the Lord of Death says, "My friend, it is your time. Come." And he says, "But I thought life was joyful, meaningful. I made so much money. I had so many cars. I married off so many daughters. I acquired so many sons-in-law. Should all this stop now?" Yama says, "What did you do for yourself?" "No, no, but dharma is suppose to protect me." "*Swadharma* is suppose to protect you. Not giving money to beggars and charitable institutions. Have you done for yourself what you have tried to do for others?" "No, no, but Lord," if you have honesty as a

businessman you say, "I only cheated people." He says, "Well, you cheated yourself, too. What can I do about it? You cheated them, you cheated yourself. Had you cheated others but not cheated yourself, you would not be in this condition today before me."

Do what you like to the outside, but do to your inside what you must, now, when it is possible. Is it possible at the moment of death? Our dharma, sanatana dharma says, or I think it is the pious interpretation of human beings that, at the moment of death even, if you remember the Lord he will protect you. Therefore we call our children Govinda, Gopala, Muruga, everything. Because, suppose you are dying and you say, "Gopala, come here." You know, you think that Gopala will come. I mean, we laugh but this is the theory behind the whole thing. Kamala, Sushila, Suchitra, Lakshmi, Saraswati... What for? "If not the god after whom my son is named, the goddess after whom my daughter is named may come." Good enough.

This 'good enough' is what has ruined our spiritual destiny as individuals, as a race, as a country. Good enough. "*Ab ke liye yeh kaafi hai.* It's good enough for now." "Why don't you start spirituality?" "No, no, I'm going to temples. It is enough for now. We shall see later." Between the now and the later which never comes is death hiding. Death does not hide its face; death hides in time. This is a secret which you should understand, because he is everywhere. One moment he is striking number nineteen here, day after tomorrow he has taken off somebody from eighty-eight, third week you find somebody from Benoni gone. He seems to be everywhere all the time. So, death is everywhere all the time. But for me, he is hiding somewhere in my future which may be the next moment in time.

I cannot say the future will last for as long as I wish. My future can last only for as long as He wishes. "But is there a way of going over him, can I beg the Lord of Death to save me

from death?" It is like asking the guillotine man in the jail when you have been sentenced to death, "Please help me." He says, "Get the order from the governor, I won't do it." So, we have to go to the governor as the Lord of Death, because he is also a functionary, as my Master has written in his book *Reality At Dawn*, all these gods and goddesses are functionaries of Nature. They are there to serve us but we worship them. In worshipping them we give them a power which they don't have, which they should not have, which they never had, and they never will have.

Like we make, as they say in my land of Tamil Nadu, you take a handful of sand, put a little water on it and mould it into a form of Ganesha, for instance. Now you have — you are compelled to worship it. You are yourself afraid to break it to pieces. "*Ganapathi ka hai.* [This is Ganapathi's statue.] How can I break it?" But you made that Ganapathi.

So you see, we make gods and goddesses of whom we are subsequently afraid. It is like a child going into the darkness and being afraid of the darkness because it has put fear into that darkness. Spirituality says, don't repeat the mistake with Lord Yama that you have done with Lakshmi, with Saraswati, with Ganesha, with Krishna, with Rama, with all these fellows. Go beyond, because they are creations of something which we call the Ultimate. Go to that ultimate state, formless, nameless, attribute-less — therefore, which you cannot worship. Then what shall I do with that Ultimate if I should not worship it? Get yourself connected with it. But if He is nameless, formless, and attribute-less, then how shall I find him? Because He exists in you, spirituality says sit down and meditate. Meditate, imagining that the divine light is in the heart, that the divine presence is illuminating the heart from inside. Connect yourself with that, and then you see what happens. It is not one death you will miss, it is millions of deaths that are still awaiting for us that you shall pass over to what we call *mukti*, and beyond that to the realisation that there is no such thing even as mukti because mukti is only for

one who is bound. For one who is not bound, what is the value of mukti? I cannot call somebody and say, "Let me out of this jail. I am in jail, I am in jail." Everybody would laugh and say, "This fellow is crazy. Put him in a jail."

So you see, mukti even is a limited concept. I need mukti or liberation only as long as I think I am in prison or bound. When I feel that I am not bound, I never was bound, there is nothing which can bind me because I am that which is inside me, comes the realisation, and then that realisation itself makes you merge with the Absolute Infinite, which we call *layavastha*, or the end of the spiritual search. This is, in short, what spirituality is all about.

We have preceptors, as the previous speaker told you, and we have one right here, Mr. Devraj Rattan; he is in 571 Fazel Street. Those who are interested may meet him. We have literature. You can read it if you wish, or if you wish to start this spiritual practice, we welcome you to it.

Thank you.

IV

EUROPE

9 to 20 July and 20 to 27 October, 1991

12

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF SAHAJ MARG

Augerans, France
9 July, 1991

We have been experimenting with some training classes in India. The course lasts about a week, six days, and there are four sessions every day. I think that the total is about twenty-four hours or maybe twenty-seven. The course content is more theoretical, starting from a discussion of religion, religious systems, the six systems of philosophy in India, yoga and subjects like that. It is going well and the abhyasis of India, I mean 'abhyasis' means preceptors also, I think that they have understood something of the Indian cultural background which to them as Indians was perhaps necessary. But I think some similar thing is also necessary here. Not that you need to understand Indian culture or the Indian background of development of yoga systems, but at least certain things like the role of ethics in our lives, the role of morality in our lives, the role of spirituality, the role of religion, the role of the Master, and most important, your own roles.

I think this last thing is what is missing when we are not successful in something that we undertake. We are always concerned with the role of the Master in human evolution, the role of spirituality, the role of science, the role of the arts, you

know, the role of the autobus, the role of spaghetti. It has a role, too, in my life; it makes me happy, it contributes to my putting on weight. Some pleasure, some problems; pleasure and problems both begin with 'P' and both go together. Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari also begins with a 'P' unfortunately, you see. I hope it is not a problem, Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari. I have now come to have the feeling that we have to structure our training course for the Westerners, the Occidentals, in a different way.

Now, this I cannot do by myself because I am not a professor of any subject. I have never studied Hinduism, I am not a student of religion, I don't know any languages, and so I have a lot of problems with this. In India we had developed a faculty, all PhDs in various subjects. Then I came up against this limitation that PhDs follow a particular way of teaching. Everything seems to fall into a rut, as we say in English. Where the cart goes, the wheel is creating a groove on the road which becomes a rut, and later on the cart can only go in that rut. It becomes stereotyped, becomes monotonous, tedious, repetitive — all the faults that the educational system itself suffers from today. The same thing said over and over again, ad nauseam. In fact, what I would say, in short, is that there is no creativity in the teaching process itself.

If you are to create people who have creativity, the process itself must be creative. The process must itself, in another sense, evolve. To my understanding evolution is the only truly creative facet of existence. That which does not evolve cannot be creative. Therefore you find this distinction between machine-made artefacts and hand-made artefacts. Something made by hand is certainly much more valuable than what is turned out on a machine. You can have all the masterpieces of the great artists reproduced by printing, or sculptures created three-dimensionally on machines, exact replicas of the original: inorganic cloning, like computers are built. But that is not creation you see, that is only repetition, copying. That is why people prefer to buy something that is

hand-made, even if it is crude, as it reflects the creative spirit of the one who has made it.

Now, teachers must learn to be creative. How to bring a creative teacher into existence I don't know, because, not being a teacher, I don't know what is a creative teacher. But I remember long ago in school, in Jubbulpore, I think I must then have been twelve years old, we used to have debating societies. They were British schools, public schools as we call them in India, and we were taught to debate. They would take up a random point you see, "right is greater than might," or "might is greater than right," and we would have two sets of boys, you know, arguing like heck over which is right and which is might, and whether might is right or right is might. This would last a couple of hours. There would be a lot of shouting and arguing and desk-banging. Eventually our professor, who was a very understanding man, would say, "Well, you see, it only shows how difficult this question is. It is something you have to decide, because in some situations might may be right, but under all situations right is might," which only means that a decision, to be right, must be ethical and not backed by strength.

By force we can do anything, but you know, at least women will know, that if you feed your child by force it doesn't retain it. If you try to force feed, it is no use. Everything must be accepted. Even love cannot be forced. That is one of the problems of the West incidentally, that one who loves thinks that he or she has the right to force that love upon somebody who is the object of that love. But because there is this force behind it, there is a retaliatory counter-effect so that the very thing that you want to achieve is negated, and your efforts are repulsed and then you start weeping and saying, "Oh, I love him so much," or, "I love her so much, and you know he doesn't reciprocate." How can there be reciprocation? Because everything is subject to the laws of Newton. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. You can love, but you cannot force love.

So, if that is the truth, education also cannot be forced down somebody's throat. One particular debate I enjoyed at the age of twelve was whether understanding is more necessary or appreciation. We had very good English teachers in those days. Now, we did not know the difference between understanding and appreciation, so my teacher brought an apple and we were all laughing for some time, because that was the original trick played on Adam and Eve — the apple. But anyway, he brought it in and said, "Take a bite." Somebody took a bite and he said, "Now John, did you understand it or did you appreciate it?" He said, "Well, I appreciated it, sir." And he said, "Now, take out that poem from that book and read it." So, it was read out and he said, "Now, did you understand it or appreciate it?" He said, "Neither, because I don't like poetry. I don't appreciate it. I don't know what this guy is talking about, so I don't understand it." Eventually, after half a day of debate, the conclusion was that understanding is fundamental to even appreciation. It should not be passed off as a boyhood or scholastic exercise in merely conducting a debate because, for me, it was something very fundamental, that if you don't understand someone, you cannot appreciate that person. If you cannot understand something, you cannot fully appreciate it unless it is a merely gastronomic exercise.

So, in teaching also we have to understand what is trying to be taught, what the teacher is trying to teach. If we understand that, I think automatically we will understand everything that is taught. Because understanding is seeking to know why. Why is this fellow teaching me? Normally there is a revulsion about teachers you see, "Oh, who the heck does he think he is sitting there on his big fat so-and-so, trying to lecture me?" But if he will try to penetrate into this man's motive, not mental but from the heart, "Why is he interested in teaching us at all? What is his interest in teaching us? How is he going to benefit?" You see, this is the most important question, because this question of how is he going to benefit

from my learning something that he is teaching me is fundamental to the relationship between the teacher and the taught. If there is suspicion, if there is doubt, "Ah-ha, this guy is here only to earn a salary, the more he teaches the more he gets, he is doing it for his sake, not our sake," the rapport between the two breaks down. I mean, it is not even established in most cases.

We have also to understand why we are there to listen. What are we here for? If you don't like to be taught, why should we be here at all? So, you have to understand why you are seeking understanding, knowledge. What is this all about? Is it just to spend half an hour or one hour, and then go back and say, "Oh, we had wonderful courses, you know." Today it is the fashion to undertake courses. So many of them: courses in language, linguistics, courses in semantics, courses in I don't know what, you see. Some three days, some fifteen days, all very expensive.

Now there comes the second problem: because we don't pay for spiritual education many of us doubt the value of spiritual education. "Yes, but he doesn't take anything. How can he be really interested in us?" If I have to take interest only when I'm paid for it, it is no longer interest. It may be interest in the monetary sense that I've invested, say, two million marks in a school and you are all paying me the fees, which is the interest on that. So, there are always two unknowables in this equation. There is the X, there is the Y. I hope our mathematics professor is here. The X is one, the Y is the other, both are unknowable, both are immutable, both are ever-changing, both are funny in many ways, and both seek a common understanding.

This common understanding is the most important because, unless we lay a ground for common understanding, neither can the teacher understand the student nor can the student understand the teacher. Understand in the real sense — not with the head but with the heart. Today, one of the frailties

built into the system of understanding is motivation, the idea of motivation. It is a business school terminology. Motivation for business managers, motivation for sales managers. Everybody has to be motivated. So, we are prone to ask, "What is motivating this guy to teach me?" That he may be motivated by nothing more than your welfare, your happiness, your spiritual growth, does not immediately penetrate us, penetrate our understanding, because in a materialistic society where the satisfaction of the self, the welfare of the self, the continued existence of the self, are the prime considerations, it is difficult to understand that somebody could be interested in something which is not in his personal interest at all.

I think that the most important need is to establish this understanding, at least in a spiritual organization like ours, that he who is trying to teach us has really nothing to gain; and that this is the truth of the matter, that if he wanted to gain he could have gained in so many ways. He could have been a professor of oriental mythology, he could have been a professor of semantics. He could have been a professor of philosophy, or even a professor of spirituality. I know there are universities who will pay for it: classes in transmission! We can start off with chains, with gears, with wheels, etc., and go on to transmission of the ultimate stage. Take three months over this, cover fifty-two hours of teaching and earn I don't know, thirty thousand dollars in an American university easily. So, why is he not there, and why is he here?

So you see, if you are able to think over these aspects, and decide why you are here, why he is here, are we here for the common purpose, and is there any giving and taking here of a material nature which will be obnoxious to such a relationship? Or if not, is it a pure, free, frank relationship where we exchange ideas, thoughts, knowledge and understanding itself? Then I think there will be a really enviable and flowery approach to this relationship, and we will gain something really vital by our participation in these seminars. Otherwise, it is too mechanical. I believe it is at the

present moment very mechanical. We come and we meditate. Many of us don't know why we meditate at all. We are worried about ethics and morality. We are worried about discipline. We are angry with them. "Who is this fellow to come and impose upon us some funny Eastern mode of thought, mode of existence? What is this funny morality? How can I be different from everybody else in society? When everybody is doing it how can it be wrong if I do it?" You see, all these questions come, and if we would think over it we would find that they are questions based on our own selfish interests.

We rebel precisely because we are attached to that which we don't want to give up. Like a child will not give up its toys. "Put away this." "No, no, I cannot do without it." And we know that when, for instance, a man of twenty-eight takes his teddy bear to bed with him, we say this fellow must be crazy. He is married but he still keeps his teddy bear next to him. For heaven's sake, what's wrong with him? "No, no, I am attached to my teddy bear." But there you think it is crazy. But when we bring our childish habits, childish ideas into adult life as abhyasis, and you are told that this is no more feasible, no more good for you, no more permissible, there is trouble, there is eruption. Then we have all these funny ideas of liberty and equality and fraternity — good old French untruths.

So, we have to talk again and again and again, and tell you that this is for your good. If somebody gets drunk he suffers. If he is foolish enough to say, "Yes, but you know, it was fun while it lasted," we must always understand that fun lasts for a short span, misery lasts much longer. And every incremental addition to fun imposes a much bigger incremental addition to the subsequent misery. This is not an avoidable equation at all. It is irreversible. But people say, "Well it doesn't matter, you see. You fellows, you have neither the fun nor the misery." "Yes, that is precisely what we are trying to be. If you want the one, you have to have the

other." Then comes this question of culture and, "You know, we are Europeans and our ways are different." Yes, but you cannot have a common goal and different ways. Isn't it? You cannot all sit in one class and expect to be taught history, geography, morality, semantics, philosophy, politics. Each class teaches something specific.

So, that old debate in school, you know, about this understanding and appreciation. Because I find, in Europe, appreciation is there in the sense of critical appreciation, tearing down things into bits and pieces, analysing them mercilessly. Like you are doing with your Christs and, I don't know, Saint Johns and everybody — finding out whether there was a woman in his life. This seems to be some sort of, I don't know what to call it, dirty interest, a morbid interest, a sexually morbid interest in digging up women in other people's lives, even if one is a Christ. So what if he had a woman in his life? You also have women in your lives and men in your lives. Are you Christs? This is the question we should ask. Assuming Christ had an affair, he still became Christ and his teaching is lasting two thousand years at least. What is **your** teaching going to last? How long is it going to last? Is there a teaching to last at all? Is there a memory that you will leave behind you? Will there be somebody to speak when you are dead and say, "Yes, he existed, or she existed"? Will there be even one? There are millions to speak about Christ; will there be one to speak about you?

So you see, we should give up these ugly, nasty, dirty thoughts. Look to the good, forget the bad, if any, remembering that in the material life the two go together. There cannot be man without woman. There cannot be truth without untruth, there cannot be solid without liquid, there cannot be air without a vacuum. This is what the philosophy says, that these two go together. Transcend both, because you cannot negate one and keep the other.

So, it is understanding that we seek. Why. Not how, not what. Everybody knows how to be moral, how to be ethical. Everybody knows what is morality, what is ethicality; we don't have to be taught these things. Every society has these norms of culture, of behaviour, gentlemanliness, superlative humanness. So, it would be stupid to try to teach in an evolved society like this, and start off from the A and the B and the C of all these things, because it is all well known. The fact that something is not followed does not mean that it is not known. It only means that it is not accepted. It was accepted in the past, it is not accepted today. Why? We have to ask ourselves these questions. Because, and there are several answers, because everybody does it. Because without it, I cannot exist. And instead of following a straight path, we keep following a circular path going back and back and back, you know, again and again into the same mire, and the same morass of ignorance and misery, self-inflicted.

So, we live a repetitive life, falling from mistake into mistake, because each future mistake appears tempting, full of the goodness of life, companionship, love. Three weeks later there is another heartbreak and we say, "Why? Why is it happening?" "Because you made it happen." "No, no it must be samskara." "Then you are not doing the cleaning." If our samskara is going to repeat eternally the same nonsense of our existence, then it is obvious that we are not doing the cleaning.

So, we are finding indulgent, self-indulgent excuses for all our behavioural mistakes, mistakes which we knowingly commit. Most of us, please be assured of this, most of us know in advance that the course that we are undertaking is disastrous but, being in Sahaj Marg, there is an all-protecting influence, the divine Master, and He will protect. This very facile and very childish assumption that the Master is there to protect us from our own mistakes, knowingly conducted and performed, is false. When you read *The Role of the Master in Human Evolution* again, if you find this thought anywhere, mark it and send it to me so that I can remove it. The Master is

not there to protect us from knowing mistakes wantonly committed. I cannot take a knife in my hand and cut my throat and expect Babuji to materialize in front of me and snatch it away from me. Accidental, yes! But for voluntary, knowing acts of self-destruction, there is no protection. I refer, of course, even to human relationships.

Every day I get letters saying, "My life is changing, I have met a man." I don't know how this business of meeting men can go on and on and on repetitiously. Again and again. "Once bitten, twice shy," they say in English. But here, once bitten, the desire to be bitten again seems to be increased. Twice bitten, we want to be bitten a third time to prove to ourselves that we shall be bitten. Fourth time we try to seek the final confirmation, "No more after this," you see. Four times bitten, not yet shy. Fifth time, "No, no, I thought, you know, after all, destiny must change. Chari, you're always speaking of change, change, change. Why doesn't my life change?" There is change. The biting is true, but the object that is biting you is different. Once it is a fly, once it is a bee, once it is a snake, once it is a scorpion.

So, who can come and protect you? Protection must be deserved. I don't believe in any automatic protection. I mean, if a Master will protect, why not God protect us? After all, He is the ultimate beloved, lover, love itself. What is He doing? Should He not protect me? He doesn't protect because He says, "I have given you a will, I have given you the intelligence to use that will properly. The onus is upon you. You have to protect yourself. You have to guide your life in such a way that it shall be free of destructive influences. If you are taking every possible step in this direction, then my power will assist you in it. But if you are going, you know, haywire, and wilfully doing things which you know are wrong, are self-destructive, then there is no protection." It is like a car, you know. You drive a car over a precipice, and expect the hand of Moses or Allah or somebody to come and hold you there, and

put you back on the road, hug you, and say, "My son, don't do this again." Doesn't happen, you see.

Therefore, this misery of the Occidental: why are there children at three with diabetes? Why are children born today with this dreadful AIDS? Why are children born with heart disease? If God is love, how can this happen? That which belongs to us, the responsibility to lead a right life in a right way for a right purpose, we are transferring to God, without transferring it entirely and saying, "I have no more any will, no more any purpose, no more any destiny. That, too, is yours." We are wantonly holding on to one part of our existence, the human, at its worst, meanest, stupidest, and wanting to hand over spiritual destiny to him, hoping that he will forget everything and still make us saints.

Babuji Maharaj used to say, "Either you give me everything, or you keep everything." By everything he meant good and bad, sickness and health. "You give me both your health and your sickness, your happiness and your unhappiness, everything, but you want to retain your happiness and give me your unhappiness. You want to keep your health and give me your sickness." He said, "That transaction is not acceptable. Everything or nothing." This understanding must come.

Now, how are we to teach this understanding? Because the first problem in teaching, in my experience — I have never been a teacher, but in my experience — is to make the teaching acceptable in some way. Indian mothers, when children don't take their milk, put a little honey on the tip, and the child starts taking its milk. There is a certain element of enticement. People have to be enticed to learn. But in spirituality it doesn't exist. What enticement can we offer you here? Instant liberation? But then you won't meditate any more; you won't be there to meditate.

So you see the difficulty in putting something across, transferring a body of understanding, is a very real difficulty.

And to get over this difficulty, the teacher has to think much more than you have to think. He has to know how to overcome this problem, how to make the teaching acceptable. Because mostly we find there are teachers who go about without tackling this problem, leaving it to you to understand or not understand as you may choose. And therefore we have this parody of education where, in a class, thirty percent pass, seventy percent don't. If the teaching had been structured in such a way, if the approach had been structured in such a human way, there should have been one hundred percent success.

So, this is the problem we are trying to overcome. Every day I get people coming to see me. Some don't accept Sahaj Marg and follow it; some don't understand transmission and receive it; some don't know why they are here but continue to be here. "If you know not...", that ancient Chinese proverb, I will put it in a different way. If you don't know what you are here for, then how can you accept the benefit when it comes to you? Because you don't know what the benefit is. It is like my going to a nice Chinese or French restaurant. The menu is all in French and I just close my eyes and play tic-tac-toe and say, "Bring this," and it is that hated object, you know, snails, escargots. Maybe the French like it very much, but for me it is obnoxious. So, I cannot play tic-tac-toe with French menus. I must ask somebody, "What is this?" And I must not be satisfied when he says, "Oh, it's wonderful Chari, you must try it, it's one of the gastronomic delicacies of the French cuisine." Yes, but when it comes before me and I see it's a snail, or something equally obnoxious...

So, you have to develop this idea that your need must be made known to your teacher. What are you looking for? Have you evaluated your need? Not your wants, your real needs. Do you have a spiritual need at all? Or are you here just for fun? Another *vacances*, you see, which the French are so crazy about. "Oh no, I am on *vacances*, Augerans, you see." "Oh, *vacances* in Augerans, what do you do there?"

So you see, unless your wishes, or shall we say needs, are really clarified, instead of just writing to your Master for help in this situation, help in that situation, help in the third situation, help in the fourth situation, it is of no use. I get hundreds of letters, all asking for help, some asking for blessings. So far, nobody has asked for spiritual knowledge, which is a pity.

So, I think the first teaching, with which I shall close this talk today is: please evaluate your needs to yourself. Understand what you are trying to be, to become. We know what we are! What are we trying to become? Have I a real understanding of it? When we say, "I want to become a perfect human being," do I understand what it really means? Can I exist as I am and yet be a perfect human being? Can I go around leading my life with multiple loves, multiple attachments, and yet become a perfect human being? What is the use of saying, "My heart is the Master's," and then trading it in the marketplace every fortnight, every week, every day? If it is His, how can you give it to somebody else? If it is yet yours to retain and to trade and to bargain for, how can you say truthfully that you have already given your heart to the Master? If your heart is with the Master, how can your body be somewhere else? Is not the heart in the body? Until the person is dead, of course. Then if that is true, why is this body here and not there?

All these fundamental questions have to be answered, because love is fundamental to existence. Spirituality deals only with love. Because God is love, love is the total and ultimate perfect condition where you don't love, but you **become** love. Now, how can you **become** love if you are throwing it off like fire throwing off sparks all the time? It must be contained, it must be allowed to mature.

If you want to drink good whisky or wine you allow it to mature. You put it away in a wine cellar and forget it for so many years. But our love we are not forgetting, every moment

of our time it is there, blasting us with its needs, good or bad, moral or immoral, permissible or impermissible. It is knocking and we are responding. Even a person who walks on crutches is walking around thinking of it. One in bed unable to move is thinking of it; youth thinking of it; old age thinking of it; middle age wallowing in it.

So you see, there are very fundamental issues that must be understood by you before you can be a successful spiritual practitioner. If these are understood and the practice is followed correctly, there is some chance of your becoming a successful spiritual person.

Then comes the question of being elevated to the levels of the perfect human being, where you **are** love. You don't love any more, there is nothing to love, nothing to hate, because you are that. A diamond is a diamond. It does not break itself into pieces and throw one-point pieces around saying, "Take a bit of me here, take a bit of me there." In a short time there is nothing left. This is how we are emptying our lives, our existences, so that in a few years there is nothing left in us, nothing to give, nothing to take, the vessel is broken, and what is put in it, you cannot retain.

So you see, the tragedy of our human existence begins with the so-called teenagers. "They must have experience, Chari." Of what? Of evil? Is it necessary that a child should get AIDS before it knows that certain things are not permissible for its good? Is it necessary that a person should go through three marriages before it understands what marriage is? I cannot understand this training in these Western countries, which exposes children to things which are dangerous, which are un-understandable, which are yet so enticing that they plump into it, fall into it, and then say, "Oh, my daughter is this, my seventeen year old is that." You find girls of seventeen with three marriages and two babies. I mean, it is too awkward for me to continue to mention all this, because there is always a reaction. "This is our society. How

can we escape?" But we are here to escape. Not to escape in the real sense of running away from something, but to evolve out of it.

If one person can evolve, why not a second? One person always shows the way, the others follow. You climb up the mountain, you have a guide going in front. He shows not merely the way but the possibility. If he stops and sits and starts breathing heavily you will say, "What sort of a guide have I got? This fellow can't climb it himself. And he's, you know, trying to guide me up. For heaven's sake, let's change the guide." Wouldn't you say it?

A true guide is not so much a teacher as an example. Like the man in front at night holds the lamp, and you follow him, because he's showing not the way, but illuminating the way for you to follow. Why we should follow such a person? Is he really acceptable? Should he be followed at all? Now, how to understand this unless you have understood something of all that we are talking about here: What is spirituality? What is the final goal? What is destiny? What is God? What is love? Unless we understand this, how can you say, "This fellow has something in him which makes me follow him"? Otherwise it's a blind following. Again a superstitious following, like other followings. We follow political leaders, we follow actresses, we follow dentists. We don't know why. It should not happen here, that I follow a guru, ignorant of what he represents, ignorant of what he has achieved, because I am totally ignorant of what I should achieve.

So, you have to know first what it is that Sahaj Marg offers. Some understanding of this you must have. Then you must come to the understanding that you are seeking that very thing that is being offered to you. Then comes the question of applying your will sufficiently to follow the way which can lead you to that place, or that destination, or that goal. Then the possibility arises that here you have a real abhyasi, interested in his own spiritual evolution, knowingly accepting

a system, knowingly accepting a Master or a Guru, knowing that the Guru represents that which he is trying to become.

So you see, I would first of all urge all of you to read more and more of Sahaj Marg literature, and understand these basic thrusts of the Sahaj Marg system. Otherwise, we do not know what Sahaj Marg is. People come to me and say, "Chariji, is Sahaj Marg a cult?" I don't know what is a cult. It is the truth from my heart. I still do not know what is a cult. "No, no, a cult is something where many people follow one man." Then politics should be a cult. Religion should be a cult. We follow fish on the seas, hoping to net them. That should be a cult.

So you see, we must know that which we must know, and not worry about all those things which we need not know. I have instances of abhyasis going for some Buddhist practice for some time, some lamaistic practices for some time, and then coming here and saying, "You know, I am destroyed; this has shattered me." "Why did you go there?" We go because we do not know what we are doing there, and we don't know what we are doing here, too. The need to wander out of the field in which you are grazing. A cow may feel that the pasture there is greener than here. "Distant pastures are greener," they say. But we are not cows. If I know exactly what is being given here, offered here, what the old fellow who is sitting there is trying to do for me, I understand why he is trying to do it because he has done it himself. This requires faith, because there are no miracles. One does not stand up and become a Christ or a Hanuman or a Krishna and say, "Look at me."

So you see, this comprehensive understanding of the system alone can make you a real abhyasi. Only that can make you progress. Otherwise, such progress as we make is incidental. I won't say it is accidental. It is incidental. It rests with the giver to give us something. As Babuji said,

"Everybody who comes to me, I throw him at least a few crumbs. But the real thing is reserved for the true seeker."

Thank you.

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LEARN BY DOING

Augerans, France
10 July, 1991

Babuji Maharaj used to say that teaching is the most difficult because normally we teach at one level, whereas real teaching should be conducted on many levels. Therefore real teachers are few, and conventional teachers are many. The absolutely true teaching is when you don't teach but the student learns. Of course, it is very difficult to understand this idea, that you really don't teach but the student learns everything. But that is the tradition, you see, and that is the fact, too, that the best teaching is assimilated when it is not taught. Why this should be so is perhaps a psychological question, because there is always a resistance to being taught, which is a manifestation of the ego. For instance, "I know everything; I have nothing else to learn." This starts from childhood.

I have observed my grandson growing up, and for me it has been a very big education to see all the possibilities manifesting themselves even from the age of, say, eight or nine months, when the child wants to do everything by itself. But there is one very important difference that I have discovered. The child wants to do everything by itself so that

it can achieve a certain mastery over its environment. When we grow up, we want to do everything ourselves merely to show off that we can do everything. And then later on we want to do it to the exclusion of everybody else, because now the ego is at play and says, "I alone will do this."

So, if you look at it in this triune aspect: the first as gaining a mastery over a situation, the second as exhibiting an ability to do it, and the third as a manifestation of ego, that he alone can do it, it is a very fascinating interplay of three different forces. In the first stage there is no ego. I don't know if psychologists will agree, but at the age of eight months, twelve months, eighteen months, there is really no ego. The child wants to do it, wants to learn how to do it, therefore it grabs every opportunity of being able to do it. In the process it falls, it hurts itself, causes agony, to the mother especially. But it is a process we all have to undergo. In the middle stage, the ego is growing, the abilities are static. The last stage has perhaps only the ego.

So, as we grow up the resistance to being taught increases. The child learns by itself. To assume that the parents teach it something is not only arrogance on the part of the parents, but ignorance on the part of the parents. The child learns by itself, by doing. This is precisely the way we try to adopt in Sahaj Marg: allowing the abhyasi to learn by himself. I am not talking now of learning in the sense of traditional book knowledge, languages, and things like that. Even there this principle applies, that unless you are willing to learn, your teacher can teach you nothing. "You can take a horse to the pond, but you can't make it drink." It is not only a proverb, it is a reality. Always reality becomes proverbs. Why? Because I choose not to learn.

I know how much trouble three of my French teachers have had with me [chuckles]; they couldn't teach me much. Therefore, today I am still talking to you in English. If I had applied myself properly, I should have been able to speak all

this to you in French. It is very simple English that I'm speaking. I could have managed with perhaps a vocabulary of less than 800 words. But there is also the ego, you see, that I am doing spiritual work, I am not required to speak different languages. It is hidden! So, not knowing a language becomes a point of ego. Initially we learn something and know it, and we become egotistic. "I know!" Later on, you say, "I don't know, I need not know, I desire not to know, I care not to know."

So you see, the ego is manifested not only in doing, it is also manifested in not doing. It is in every phase of activity. Like Julius Caesar said, "I will not come. I shall not come," to the Senate. First he says, "I cannot come." And then according to Shakespeare, Cassius asks him, "But why? What shall I tell them Caesar?" Then he has to indulge in this arrogance of saying, "Say that Caesar will not come."

So, we proceed to bolster our egos: first, I cannot learn; second, I will not learn. This problem of the ego is the most difficult for a teacher. I don't know how many teachers recognize it. They think students are stupid. I do not think so at all. No student is stupid. I had a very interesting discussion with a professor of mathematics, who is perhaps here, who is going to conduct experiments with so-called stupid people, failures, and prepare them for what you call the baccalaureate degree, at age eleven, twelve, like that. He is also, for purposes of variety, I suppose, going to take some stupid people aged sixty-four like myself, and prepare them for the same examination. Now, if that stupid person will co-operate, you can do anything with that stupid person. There is no stupidity other than self-imposed stupidity. A closed mind, an unwillingness to learn, an arrogance which says, "I shall not learn." A good teacher must recognize this and attack that unwillingness, subdue it, entice the owner of that unwillingness out of his or her shell into which they have wrapped themselves. And the battle is won.

This problem we face with our abhyasis. "Why should I meditate?" I don't know if this question is so common in Europe, but in India we are frequently asked this question. "If Babuji is a special personality, God incarnate, why can't He liberate me without my going through these stupid processes of meditation, and cleaning, and all this nonsense?" I also used to wonder why not? It would be nice if I could just go to Babuji once and he would say, "Well, it is finished. You are liberated." But then there is no fun in life, you see. You go for the job the first morning and you are made the Managing Director. There is no fun any more.

People don't recognize that something achieved without effort has no satisfaction for us. Sometimes I suspect that really good educational institutions, like the Harvard Institute for instance, deliberately make their courses a little difficult to enhance your sense of achievement. "Oh, I am out of Harvard, or I am out of UCLA," you see. We can go back to our simian ancestry, put up our hands and shout, "Aaahhhhh!" You know, like Bjorn Borg does on the tennis court every time he wins a match. We are simian in our essence even today. We have to broadcast our victories by bellowing like apes and by thumping our chests. You see it on every playfield. Why this reversal to our ancestry? Why not we become divine, and when we have achieved something, sit quietly in meditation and thank the giver? Because it is again the ego: "I have achieved it, I have done it."

I remember that when Babuji Maharaj passed away and I was announced as his successor, I received a congratulation card, typically from America. It could not be from anywhere else in the world. It showed a staircase in profile, like that, with a dachshund dog, which has put its two forepaws on the top stair, tongue lolling out, gasping, and on top of it is written, "I MADE IT!" [laughter] Typically American reaction, [laughter] typically American sentiment, and a typically American card. For them there is no life other than the life of achievement. Not learning, not knowledge, but

success. "He is a successful guy!" I remember one girl, one of our abhyasis, who introduced her father to me and said, "This is my dad. He is a good provider." She did not say, "I love him, he loves me, you know, and he is a wonderful father," etc. She just said, "He's a damn good provider." Now, if this is the relationship between father and daughter, that he provides well for my existence, gives me good food, keeps the fridge full of Coke in two-gallon or four-gallon cans, I don't know, gallon flagons of ice cream, he is a good father, he is a good provider.

So you see, everything has become distorted. Human relationships have become distorted. The husband is a good husband only if he can give you furs and diamonds. And of course, the great Kinsey messed everything up with his reports glorifying certain aspects of the man/woman relationship without which, today, we think there is no man/woman relationship. The erotic aspects of life. How much erotic is your husband? I suppose they would have a table on which you can put eighty percent, ninety percent, seventy-five percent! This is all wrong education. This is titillation of the senses, titillatory education. But we have been brought up in that tradition in the West.

So, when people come to Sahaj Marg, they expect experiences, "Yes, but I have been meditating for three months and I have no experience." Now, we have to train people out of this idea: that this is an experiential system. This is an evolutionary system. It is also a revolutionary system, but it is not per se experiential. Our experiences have nothing to do with our progress. If they have any value, it is in showing you what grossness you've had embedded in you, which is being released by the cleaning or the meditation process. To use a very crude example: when you vomit, you can see what you have eaten before you vomited. Nothing more. It stinks, because it has passed through your system. So, the human system really makes everything stink.

You will remember the story I've told you about the guru and his disciple: a boy who wanted to become a *shishya*, a disciple, and the guru said, "Bring me *guru dakshina*." "What shall I bring you?" He said, "The worst thing on earth that you can find." The boy went about for three years, finding each thing worse than the other, until one day finally in the toilet, he discovered that his excrement was the filthiest, dirtiest. So, he was going to pick it up, when a voice came, "What are you doing?" "No, no, I'm taking you to my guru as guru dakshina" "Why?" "He said, 'Bring the worst thing that you can find on earth,' and *voilà*, it is here." And then the voice said, "Yesterday, I was chocolate *gâteau*, I was pizza, I was *fromage*, and you touched me and I became this. You may decide what is the worst thing on earth." So, the would-be disciple went empty-handed to his guru and fell at his feet. The guru asked, "Where is the guru dakshina?" He said, "Here I am, Master."

So you see, if experience has any value, it is in showing you what has been in you, the original experiences that created an impression that is being released, very much like when a photograph is developed. The impression of the scene that is recorded on the film is released by the developing process. Here, with cleaning it comes out. Some people experience; some people don't experience. I think it is morbid to try to look and see what is going out of you. I know some people who never bathe and suddenly one day they bathe and say, "Look how much dust I have got on my head." It is morbid. To know what is dirty in us, unacceptable in us, unnecessary in us, is a morbidity which we should avoid. That sometimes we have good experiences, like we are passing through a beautiful scene, is also similarly something we are throwing out of ourselves. Now, if either you hate this or you become attached to that experience, both are going to deepen until they form fresh samskaras. How to translate this into real experience? People say, "Yes, but you know, I want some experience to prove to me that the system is really working."

It is like a boy of twelve saying, "Daddy, let me vomit a little to see that I have really eaten." "But don't you feel that you have eaten in your stomach? Hasn't your hunger been satisfied?" Many of these rather peculiar desires still rest in us, though we routinely say the prayer, "Our wishes are putting bar to our advancement."

So you see, the teaching is very troublesome. If you say, "Oh, most preceptors say experiences have no value," but preceptors must learn to explain **why** they have no value, why their only value is in showing you that something has gone. Like when I am moving in a train, a station flashing past me shows that I'm moving in this direction. If the station remains static, it means that I am also static, and if the station goes past me in the opposite way, it means that I am moving backwards. These are only indicators of how fast I am moving. If you cannot see this then you will see nothing.

So, this idea of seeing something, feeling something, is bringing the human perceptions to play on a state of existence which is beyond the human level of existence. It is like trying to measure air with a metre stick. So you see, we are trying to transpose one dimension of experience into another dimension of being, and suffering the consequences and saying, "I feel nothing, I know nothing, I see nothing; Sahaj Marg is a failure." Whereas the opposite is true: that so long as I can feel something, see something, I am at the lowest level of the spiritual ladder. Abhyasis should be trained to recognize this, and to know that when they continue to know, they are really only at the level of knowing. They have to go to the level of feeling. When they transcend that, they are going to a level where nothing more exists, either to be known, or to be felt. That is the real state of progress.

"Then what is this for? Why should I meditate any more?" Because you have to retain this state. It is like being born and continuing to eat all your life so that you will continue to live. So, at that level of growth, why you continue

to meditate is for several reasons. One, because your Master asks you to do it. Second, because you need to keep the fire burning, the state retained without fall. You see, there are so many reasons for these things. When we ask ourselves, "Why am I here?", we are asking a very fundamental question, "Why I am here; what for am I here?" Which means I would rather not be here, because people who are happy, healthy, and wise, never ask this question. It is only the people who are failures, dropouts, who say, "Why am I here? Why should I suffer so much? I never wanted to be born, I didn't want to be here." You know, it's a crazy life in any case.

So, we have to understand many things by doing. Therefore Babuji said, "I teach by letting them do," which is very logical. You learn to bicycle by mounting the bicycle and pedalling. Initially you may have somebody to hold you so that you don't fall until you develop a sense of balance. Later on you ride yourself. You cannot possibly learn how to bicycle from a book of thirteen easy lessons, sold for $8.99. Nor can you learn to swim by lying on your belly on the floor and moving your hands and legs around. Exercise, but not swimming.

To master anything, you have to master it by **doing** it. This is the fundamental aspect of teaching. You can only be taught by being made to do that which you want to learn. But, unfortunately again, commencing with the Greek tradition and the Occidental tradition, we are taught that we can learn something by not doing it, so that later on we can do it.

The cookery book is an exemplary example of this, what I call stupidity. Exact measurement, precise quantities, everything is nice. Take two potatoes, peel them, peeled! Boil them in water, boiled. Then what? Then they give you a number of ingredients. You don't know which to put first, which to put last. Frying and adding or adding and frying? You learn by experiment. Which cook has ever learned from a book? Therefore, I am always amused when I go for lunch or

dinner in one of those Western houses, occasionally when I am invited, and you see half a dozen people pouncing upon that poor lady of the house, "Give me the recipe!" As if the recipe will instantly make you a good cook. Recipes are indicators, like if you go down the street, it says, 'Belmont, point two kilometres,' but you have to walk that two hundred metres to get to Belmont. Indicators tell you where a thing is. To get there, you have to go there.

Our books teach us what you can do, how you can do it. But to do it, you have to sit down and do it yourself. So, we have to teach by example, we have to teach by precept — two things. The example is there. Now, if you are just admiring the example and say, "What a wonderful Master I have," it is not enough. He may be wonderful, but he is wonderful only for himself, not for you. "What a beautiful apple in the store window," you see. Yes, but there is a pane of glass between it and myself. To chew it, I have to first acquire it.

Now, what is the right way of acquiring a spiritual status? The right way is to go to the one whom you deem to be fit enough to give you that state, and obey him. The first teaching, as far as the spiritual systems of knowledge and experience and achievement are concerned, is obedience. There can be no teaching without this condition of obedience being met. It is not only the student who obeys. It is the teacher, also, who obeys. The teacher obeys his sense of duty, his need to pass on his knowledge, his achievement, to somebody else. He is obeying his inner impulse to transmit. In short, it is an impulse of generosity, kindness, and above all, love for humanity, which compels him to do what he is doing. There is no other compulsion. It is like you feed your child because you love your child. If I tell you, "You are compelled to feed your child!" you will say, "Nonsense Chari, there is no compulsion. I do it willingly." Yes, but why? Why not the neighbour's child? Because you love **your** child; you don't love your neighbour's child. "Love thy neighbour as thyself"? Yes, Christ said so. He never said love thy neighbour's child

as thine own child. But you are not even able to love your neighbour; how can you love your neighbour's child? But you love your child, therefore, you put your money on it, your love upon it, you sort of mortgage your security and your future on its future.

Between the teacher and the student, there must be this flow of love from the teacher to the student, reciprocated by obedience from the student to the teacher. That the student should love the teacher, is, at least in the beginning, an absolute impossibility. Abhyasis who start off saying, "I want to love the master. Please, Chari, tell me how to do it," are crazy. It is not possible. It is good that it is not possible. And it is good that it will never be possible in the beginning, though it must happen in the end. Because when this symbiosis is created, and He loves, and I obey because He loves me, then all teaching becomes possible, at all levels. If I am going to obey only at the physical level, not with my mental/intellectual level and my innermost levels of my heart, then it is a parody of this relationship. It is a falsity. In a sense, I would say, it is prostitution. It is like a woman giving her body but not her heart.

So, there is either a love relationship between the two, or there is only a transaction between the two. It is unfortunate that you have a school of psychology called Transactional Analysis. It reflects, very perfectly, and effectively, the psyche of the moment that prevails in this culture. To me, it is a tragedy and a shame that there can be transactions between human beings.

So, you see how degraded things appear when you look at them from one way, and how wonderful and efficient they appear when you look at them from another side. Now to look at things from two sides and to develop a balance: that when I look at clouds from below they look dark, but when I fly above them they are silver on top, is the true sense of balance, is a recognition of the fact that in material life, there is good

on this side, there is bad on that side of the same thing. That potatoes are wonderful when baked, but they give me gas problems later; that artichokes are very good but they are stupid to eat. Then we come to the real perception that life is made up of two opposites.

Life cannot exist without the interplay of the two opposites. There has to be pain and pleasure. There has to be good and bad, sickness and health, sorrow and misery and ecstasy. And anyone who tries to avoid the one will have to do without the other, too. If you seek pleasure you will have pain. There is no question about it. Then there is no use in rushing to your spiritual guide and saying, "Why this pain?" This is the standard question of human beings, asked from time immemorial. If you are wise enough to understand that like two sides of a coin, the head on one side and the tail on the other, life is made up of a blend of the two extreme opposites, and that you cannot avoid either — there has to be pain, and there has to be pleasure. It is like tossing a coin: which will come up heads? You don't know. It is a gamble. In this sense, life is a gamble.

But the spiritual law also says there is a way of getting out of this. Instead of seeking pleasure, seek pain, and there will be pleasure following it. This idea of asceticism stems from this fundamental belief: that when I deal with one opposite, the other opposite will come, and that is to my good. We seek disease and then take medicine. Take the medicine first and there is no disease. Accept sorrow and there is only happiness afterwards. So, the human being's ignorance at its worst level of manifestation is in this pleasure-seeking, happiness-seeking life that we are trying to lead. It is doomed to failure. It has nothing to do with God. It has nothing to do with samskaras. It is a fact of nature.

This should be taught in schools. But today's schools only glorify material existence. "Does your father have a car? Oh, BMW, wonderful! And yours? Oh, Volkswagen. Well, I

hope next year he'll have a BMW, too." And the child is made to feel insignificant, you know, less than the other child. Our schools are teaching this. Our society is teaching this. You go to your neighbour and they have a nice oven, and you want a nice oven. They have a nice car; you want a nice car. "Keeping up with the Jones's." "They have a silver teapot? Why, my teapot made of clay is quite good." "No, no, but I must have a silver teapot because they have it." And when something is very expensive, like in Switzerland, for example, they say, "Oh, we have good standards. We have the highest standards."

I was appalled recently, driving through Switzerland, to find huge sheets of copper being laid on the roof at the junctions, where tin would have sufficed, because it is going to be covered in any case with the tiles, or whatever it is. "No, no, but we have the highest standards in the world, Chari." I mean, somebody told it to me, perhaps amused at my ignorance, that I don't know Switzerland is such a wonderful country, with such high standards of living that perhaps they will plate it with gold next year. After all, all the wealth of the world is hidden there. Who is going to gripe if you take a couple of tons and coat your roof with it, so long as you can give it back when they want it?

So you see, this is how our standards of understanding, our sense of values, have become totally destroyed. And when we say, "Why do we want expensive things?", as one of our maxims says, "Be simple and in tune with nature," we rebel. Our first instinct is to rebel. "Oh, they come from India, and they have nothing there, only poverty and misery. And these blighters come and tell us to be simple. What do they mean?" "I am used to *matelats* Chari, eight inches." "But you have a back problem." "No, no. That's not because of the *matelats*. My third vertebrae from the bottom is a little upset, you know. I am having the expert examine it." "And who is your expert?" "He is one of this new breed of therapists," what do they call them? Chiropractors. I once had a back problem myself, and

Don Sabourin told me there is a fifth cervical vertebrae expert in Vancouver! [laughter] If it was the fourth or the sixth, he couldn't manage, you know, but of the fifth he is absolutely the expert. [laughter] I mean, this is specialization at its absurdest limit.

It is like having atomic scientists: one can only deal with the atoms of lead, the other can only deal with the atoms of silver, the third only with the iron atoms. "Oh, he is an 'Fe' specialist." "What is 'Fe'?" "Ferrum, don't you know? Iron." "And you?" "Oh, I am a 'Cu' specialist, Chari." "What is 'Cu'?" "Cuprum." This is knowledge? This is science? Barbarous, stupid, ridiculous, analytically broken into pieces. Today, no specialist knows anything other than his specialty. Therefore we have this system of medicine where you go to one man and he sends you to six other people. Because he only knows your stomach, or perhaps the first half of the stomach, and the upper half of the stomach, somebody else will deal with the rest. [laughter]

It's not a laughing matter, because in countries where we pay for our medical treatments, like in India, it is enormously expensive. I have a pain in the head, they send me for a chest x-ray. I don't know why. He says, "Well, to make sure there is nothing else wrong." That I am alive and sound is not enough, you see. Then I go for the chest x-rays, and he says, "Chari, since you are here, why don't we take an abdominal picture, too; make sure that the intestines are functioning okay." It's all right for societies where you don't pay, where your so-called insurance, or assurances, as you say, takes care of everything. What about the poor people who cannot afford even their hair to be examined?

This specialization is the curse of humanity. But we are taught that specialization is good. And, in the same way you have love cut up into pieces. Love in the drawing room, love in the bedroom, love outside in the garden, love in a hotel. We don't know what love really is. The girl who is good in a hotel

bedroom is no good at home, you see, because she doesn't know how to react. This is specialization. Absurd! That which is whole, which must always be whole, is cut up into bits and pieces. This is exemplified in India in the temple worship, where they take coconuts for *prasad*. The coconut is offered to the lord, broken, and the two halves exposed to show you that there is really nothing.

When you break something in two there is really nothing. When you break a heart, you don't have two broken halves. There is no heart left. This must be very beautifully and clearly understood: that you can break a stone into two pieces, but that the heart cannot be broken into two pieces. Either it is whole, or it doesn't exist at all. Therefore, you find people who have a heart, and you find heartless people. The physiological heart may be there, but it is only an organ, a pump, beating away. It is nothing more. Now, who is going to teach us all this? Where are we going to learn it? How are we going to learn it? And, how are we going to apply it in our lives? It is no use learning something which I don't have to apply, or which I cannot apply, or which I will never apply in my life.

This is another tragedy of education, that we are taught so many things which we never use. When I was first fascinated with these pocket computers, you know, these calculators, I went through the leaflet of a particular company in India which makes them, and I made the imbecilic mistake of buying the most complicated one. It had all the calculations, you know, integral calculus, how to calculate electrical things, mechanical things, chemical things. And all that I ever did on it was to play with it and prove to myself that thirty times thirty is really 900! [laughter] I didn't know how to use the other functions available on that calculator. Now, what was the need for it? I could have had one free, one of these card calculators, you know, which does the four necessary and basic functions: addition, multiplication, subtraction and division. But, I had to prove to myself that I am a great genius,

you see, and I bought the most expensive calculator on the market. This is what all of us do. We buy the most expensive car, just to prove to ourselves that we are great.

When we say in Sahaj Marg, "Be simple and in tune with nature," we don't really understand it. We immediately think it means no toilet, but going out into the fields. Cold-water bath. It is not that. Simplicity, in tune with your environment. After all, your forefathers, not that long ago, didn't have heating in the house, did not have cars, and went about on bullock carts, or horse carts perhaps. In this village they still do it.

Why do you think civilization means complication of life? Why should it be so? On the contrary, civilization really means 'to be civil.'. Be civil to yourself, respect yourself, understand yourself, be honest with yourself, and extend the same generosity of thought and convention to others around you. 'Civil behaviour'. When you meet somebody, don't bark like a dog, "Yes, what do you want?" "Yes, *s'il vous plaît*, can I be of assistance to you?" This is civilization.

Civilization is not in a nation's cars and atomic plants. They are destructive. You know that it is a well-known truth that more people are killed by car accidents than even by cancer. But what is the use? If you try to tell them, they will say, "Well, this fakir from India will only teach us this. The blighter doesn't have a car. He doesn't have a house. He eats with his fingers. *Mama mia*! You know, he doesn't even know which hand to hold the fork in! And he has the cheek and temerity to come and teach us culture?" Of course, the last item of culture is that unmentionable thing in the toilet, the paper. We are amused when we read in some books that in Russia they have an enormous shortage of toilet paper. In India it wouldn't matter at all, you see. We never think of toilet paper. It is one item that we do without very comfortably, very hygienically, too.

Now, this is the perversion of culture, cultural values, cultural requirements. When we are taught, 'be simple' — be simple in your dress, simple in your manners, simple in your education, simple in your way of expression — it goes against the grain because we have had centuries of wrong education, mis-education.

Now, I am not suggesting that it will take centuries to correct the fault of centuries. Any fault can be corrected in a moment. You may have gone a hundred miles in the wrong direction, but you have only to turn your car around to be in the right direction again. You may have been sleepless for ten nights, but one night of sleep is enough. You may have fasted for twenty-three days, but the next meal will fill your stomach and fulfil your hunger. Nature is very magnanimous and generous in enabling us to correct our mistakes in an instant of time, even if that mistake has been continued over centuries of ignorance and superstition. But this enormous generosity of Nature, its love for us, we don't use.

So, education must teach us this, too. Otherwise, we have what you so beautifully call in French, *culpabilité*. Yes, but when I can correct all the mistakes of my life in an instant of, what? — not confession in church, because confession demeans us, makes us confess something, it is obnoxious to the human psyche — but in a moment's repentance, "Lord I shall not do this again," it is finished.

You see, repentance, according to Sahaj Marg, is a total intention, which is a determination not to repeat that mistake again. It is nothing more. You don't have to go on your knees before somebody, and be pardoned, "In the name of the Father and the Holy Ghost." Who is he to pardon me? God must pardon me. And where is this God? It is in myself. So, who must pardon me? I must pardon myself. If I cannot, I cannot pardon anybody else. And how can I pardon myself? Well, I just have to say, "The whole chapter is closed. Here is a new page. I start life all over again, from this instant in time." It is

finished. There is no more guilt, there is no more beating the breast, no more continuing on the same path without changing direction, continuing to do the same things again and again, feeling more and more guilty, until we end up a mess.

But religion continues this absolute falsity of saying that God has to come and redeem you, because there is a God outside, not inside. He is in a church or in a temple, not within me. He is in heaven, not on earth. Therefore this culpability continues. A stage comes when we cannot go to church any more, because we feel too culpable. There's a church and we start reviling the church, and we say, "Well, darn it, what is this church for?" And we become really irreligious and atheistic. Now it is religion which drives you away from itself.

On the contrary, we should be able to bring people nearer us and say, "My brother, my sister, don't worry about what you have done. It is in the past. It cannot be changed. The past is past. Forget it, once and for all. From today, are you willing to turn over a new page in your existence, and to lead a new life?" "Yes! *C'est tout.*" This is the easiest thing. It is the thing which liberates you from any feeling of guilt for the past whether wantonly or un-wantonly done. I think it is the first and perhaps the greatest liberation, you see, that I don't have to feel guilty about anything. But this teaching is not available, you see. We are always being preached at: "Eternal hell, sulphurous fumes." What is all this nonsense? If man cannot be redeemed by God, that God is useless to me. If He is outside myself, certainly He will lack that capacity. It is like knowledge in books. What is the use? I must have that knowledge in myself to do something with it. The air that another man breathes is of no use to me — I must be able to breathe.

So you see, the whole value, the whole thrust of a spiritual education is: is it in you? A God outside? He may be the most powerful God but he is of no use to me. It is sufficient if I have Him in his atomic presence within me,

because his atomic presence is no less and no more than his super-cosmic presence. It is Himself. This is what spirituality teaches. No god. No names of gods. No presence of gods. He is in me. I have to recognize this fact. I have to remove the grossness that is surrounding it, like removing the cover over a lamp, and allow Him to manifest His presence there. And there He is. You are now a changed person. You are no longer a person in that sense, you are a container for divinity, which allows that divinity to flow out of you in all directions. Therefore, you are a divinised person.

These are the things that we have got to learn, and they are very important lessons. They can be learned only by doing. There is no use in somebody telling you, "God is within you," until you find that old fellow sitting there. There is no use in cheating and saying, "Yes, I feel His presence." It is no use in feeling His presence outside. I can feel the breeze outside me easily, but am I able to feel the breeze in my lungs? If not, I am dead. Food outside me is no use. Air outside me is no use. Water outside me is no use. The ultimate useless thing is God Himself, if He is outside me. In me, He is my friend, He is my self, eventually He is me.

So, I hope you will consider all these aspects of spirituality and forget the needs of the intellect and that you are a scientist or an intellectual person, and all this blah, blah, blah of the Western culture. It is destroying human beings in their very beginning. And, for heaven's sake, don't call yourself anything. Because if you are that, you are nothing else. One who must be all must be nothing. It is difficult to understand, but the Hindu philosophy, which I think is the most sublime, says, "He who has nothing has everything. He who has something, only has that something."

Thank you.

14

We Are Really Asleep

Augerans, France
11 July, 1991

I will try to deal from personal experience. As I told you on the first day, I am not a scholar, so I cannot give you any scholarly discourses. But, in the course of my life I have found that experience is the greatest teacher. I am not now referring to spiritual experience about which I spoke yesterday: the experience of the coming out, of the release of samskaras in your inner self — that has no teaching value. But experience of life, you know, the joys, the sufferings, these things have a great deal to teach. Also, in the search for knowledge there are certain truths that we find as we go on. And one of the first truths is that as we develop, it is more and more difficult to find that which we want. You must understand this: that as we develop it is more and more difficult to find what we want, whether it is knowledge, or guidance in practise.

At the lowest level you can find knowledge in any book. For instance, you take children's books. A-B-C-D you will find in hundreds of books. It doesn't really matter what you buy. It is a question of taste. It is a question of colour. It is a question of the smell of the paper, I suppose, the binding, attractively bound, attractively presented, so that it will

capture the children's attention. But the A-B-C-D is the same. So, in a real sense, it doesn't matter what you buy, so long as it has the alphabet. Whether 'A' is for an apple, or 'A' is for an ass, it doesn't really matter. 'A' is for both. You all remember that famous song, "Do Re Me Fa: Do, a deer; Me, a name I call myself; Fa, a long distance to go." But they are not really "Do, a deer," and "Me, a name," and "Fa, a long, long way to go." They are used to train the child to sing.

In spirituality this truth is of paramount importance. At the lowest level, you can find the teaching that you want anywhere. I have this little difficulty with understanding one of Shakespeare's references where he says, "Books in brooks, sermons in stones, knowledge in everything." Yes. But what books in brooks? What sermons in stones? That which is basic and so common that you can find it anywhere and yet contains wisdom, only the wise can extract that wisdom out of it. That which is very rare and is all wisdom, only the wise can find it. It is well understood that if you read a book, very often there is one sentence or one paragraph which is of value to you. That's why we underline books, or mark them. It is like a whole field of corn: ten hectares, and when you harvest it, you put all the corn in a few bags and take them away in your car. We have to know where to find, what to find, how to find. And, having found it, what to do with it. Therefore, you see, teaching has to be at several levels, as I said.

Now, when we are searching we have no guidance. There is something in us which intuitively guides us in the right direction. When we start off life we don't have guides. Now, if I need a teacher to tell me where to find a teacher, that would be obviously absurd. I cannot have a teacher to show me a teacher. I cannot have a lover to send me to another lover. If this is a lover, it is enough. If it is not, he is not going to show me, or she is not going to show me, where I can find another lover.

So, if you look at it that way, the first shot must hit the target. Which is a very rare thing. You must be a super shot. You must know how to aim. You must know where the target really is, what you are aiming for. So you see, this whole question of 'seek and find' is very difficult to understand, to realise. If we spend our life reading books, and trying to get knowledge through books, guidance through books, we may end up as intellectuals, as philosophers, but certainly not as spiritual people. I am very emphatic about this: that you can certainly never be a spiritual person by reading books alone. This is the fault of the systems prevailing in the various parts of the world, that we are taught to look into books. "If you don't know the meaning of a word, look in the dictionary."

I want to tell you a personal experience. Somebody presented me with one of these electronic dictionaries. But I could not find in it one single word that I wanted. It is all right for the tyro in language, who knows probably six hundred words and wants to find out the other words. For him it is useful. But for a developed person to find that which he wants, for example, for a PhD in English, or English Literature, if he wants an electronic dictionary, it is quite obvious that most of it will be useless to him because he knows all of it. And, it is also quite possible that the few words that he wants to refer will not be in it. Therefore the difficulty of finding what you want as you develop increases. It does not decrease.

Now, research people must understand this very exactly. Some people think that the more you do research, the easier research becomes. On the contrary, it should become more and more difficult. I was amused to read the question of prime numbers, for instance. I read somewhere that a third generation computer took three and a half years to find the next unknown prime number. And, it is quite possible that the fourth generation computer will take forty years to find the next higher prime number, because the next prime number will contain practically everything, you know, and will be divisible. You have to find something that will not be divisible

by anything that has been existing so far, and that is more and more difficult. If you look at it this way, can you find the last prime number? First of all, it doesn't exist. In an infinite series there is no last number. Therefore, there cannot be a last prime number. I consider such research a waste of time, money, expenditure. What on earth is the use of knowing the next prime number? To whom is it beneficial? It is a waste of computers. It is a waste of mathematicians. It is a waste of time. It is a waste of money, taxpayer's money. Research must be oriented in such a fashion that it is productive of human good will, of human good. Otherwise, we have a lot of research going on today which is going to destroy the human race. But yet, we are proud of it.

When we travel by the TGV we look outside. We see the atomic reactors, we see the CERN facilities for rotating atoms around a circle, and we are very pleased. We are very happy. "Look what we have. Do you have this sort of thing in India, Chari?" Not at all. I'm not sorry, I'm proud that we don't have such things, because they are essentially destructive forces. Is it good to have good forces? Sahaj Marg says no. Because you should not make the mistake of thinking that, all right, we'll throw this away, we'll get some good reactors. There is no such thing as a good reactor or a bad reactor. There is no such thing as a good rifle or a bad rifle. Both are there to kill. One may kill you more effectively, more efficiently, more quickly. That's about all, you see. So, force, the idea of force, is abhorrent to Sahaj Marg. Power is abhorrent to Sahaj Marg. Here we deal with forceless force, powerless power. In fact, the whole Sahaj Marg philosophy is full of such contradictory usages.

How to understand this? How to understand what is forceless force? Or, if you want to translate it into mundane life, how to understand loveless love? It is a very necessary thing to be understood by at least our youth. You see, the elder generation is spoiled. What is loveless love? It means the perfection of love, the ennobling of love, to a state where the

common understanding of love is no more existing, only the ultimate transcendental reality of love is existing. It is easy to understand what loveless love must be. But people will say, "But how can loveless love be really love, Chari?" Yes, it is. That is the only real love. If you bring it down to its, shall we say, material context, physical context, as I said once before: one four letter word changes into another four letter word: L-O-V-E becomes L-U-S-T. Now, how can L-U-S-T be L-O-V-E?

So, it is possible to understand the idea of a loveless love, if we are willing to understand. "No, no, that is all for philosophers, you see, for sixty-five year-old people. But what about the young people?" Yes. Love is the same for the young as for the old. Food is the same for both. Air is the same for both. Life is the same for both. There is no such thing as a young life and an old life. Only the body is young or old. Life is always eternal; it has no age.

So, how can the fundamental values, the fundamental verities, the fundamental truths, differ according to age? Can the idea of justice change with age? If you rob an eight year-old boy, can you tell the court, "I only robbed an eight year-old boy, it cannot be robbery." You cannot say it. So, the fundamental values are the same for all. If they have no relevance to age and sex, they cannot have relevance to race, to culture, to tradition. You cannot have different moral conceptions in different religions. It only means they are not really religions. They are only codes.

This you have to understand with your heart, because if you try to understand with your body, the body will say, "Nonsense, this is love. That, we shall come to when we are seventy, when this is no more possible." But, that is not negation; that is not renunciation; that is not understanding. It is like a robber saying, "I can no longer rob; therefore I have renounced robbery." It is when you can do something that you have to renounce it. A beggar cannot say, "I have renounced

money. No, no, I have renounced money." He is a beggar, he has always been a beggar. Renunciation must always come from one who has something to give up. Now it does not mean that we should immediately jump into our cars and start hunting around for things which we have never done so that we can do them and then renounce them. The idea has to be understood. That when I say I have stopped telling lies, it means I told lies. It does not mean I should start telling lies and then stop telling lies. For one who has never told anything but the truth, even the idea of a lie will be confusing. He will not be able to understand what a lie is.

So you see, we start off with an innocence that is native to the human being, natural to the human being. We call it in all languages, I think, child-like innocence. Not child-ish, but child-like. Why child-like innocence? Because for the child, there are no opposites. It exists, it reacts. A child never tells lies until we teach it to tell lies. A child never feels guilty until we make it feel guilty. It drops an egg, and it splatters, and the yolk is all over the carpet. And you say, "What have you done?" The child begins to feel guilty. If an elderly person dropped a glass of whiskey and it went on the carpet, you cannot blame him. "Oh it doesn't matter, *ça va*." This is hypocrisy. You have one attitude for the child, one attitude for yourself, one attitude for your guest, one for somebody you hate, one for somebody you love. This is precisely disintegration of character. If people are schizophrenic, paranoid, it is because we cultivate this in ourselves by our own behaviour, adopting different attitudes towards different people, different situations. And end up not knowing which is the real me. Then I am in trouble; I have to go to the psychiatrists.

In yoga we try to bring back the whole thing. Re-integration of character. When there is only one person, he reacts in the same way to everything. It is like a telescope. Whoever looks through it, it shows the same thing. How can the telescope show you different things? One for the white

man, one for the black man, one for the rich man, one for the poor man. It doesn't exist. Anybody who looks at the moon sees the same moon.

So you see, from a disintegrated, diversified, lost multiplicity of characters, we try to bring them back together by meditating on the inner self, which is essentially a unity. It cannot be anything else. Why meditate? This is one of the reasons. In my external life I am many things, I am many persons. In my inner life I am one. By meditating on Him I learn, I train myself, to slowly become one personality again.

Now what is the truth of that one personality? What is the value of becoming a single entity, a single personality, a single person? Who can say 'I'? Now, we have no right to say 'I,' we have to say 'I's,' because we have many 'I's'. Something to the husband, something to the lover, something to the father, something to the mother. Therefore, we are bewildered more than anybody else. All bewilderment is personal. All feeling of being lost is personal. A child feels lost because it doesn't know where it is. We feel lost because we are in too many places, in too many situations, with too many things and persons, and we really don't know where we are. Therefore we say, "I am lost. I don't know where I am." So, we have to bring all this back together.

In bringing this back together, medicine cannot help, therapy cannot help, temples cannot help, places of worship cannot help. Because that is yet one more facet of my existence, what we call the religious aspect of my self. For the nonce! For the time being! I go there, pray on my knees, or on my back, or whatever it is, assume that I have been pardoned, bring back *prasad* if it is India, and think, "Well, everything is okay." But, inside, there is this gnawing doubt. Have I really achieved anything by going to that place of worship? If we have really achieved something, we would not go back to that place a second time. I mean, this is so obvious that you don't have to say it. Why should we go back again and again?

Because the first visit was useless. It is followed by the second visit. That is useless. So we go back for the third time. And ultimately, when we are dead we are put in a coffin and taken in procession to that same church where we were born and baptized. And again relying on somebody who pretends to be a priest and who says some things, and we are interred with our bones. "There lies Caesar."

So, we may be beginning our life in a place of worship. If you end it there, your life has been a total waste, a lie. This is the first fact of religion. He who ends his life where he began it, has not lived. If he has not lived, he was dead all along. Therefore he never felt anything during life. There was nothing to either enjoy or suffer. He lived like an automaton, like a robot, pushed by his samskaras into a semblance of a living being.

The toys are wound up by keys, which turn springs, or are powered by batteries. Children sometimes find a very realistic gorilla, for instance, powered by four batteries, and it makes sounds and its eyes are blinking. Children are afraid. They won't accept such a toy. Where does this fear come from? It is from the samskara. And this is so life-like.

We are all life-like semblances of living realities. The body is created by nature, the motivating force being our samskaras, pushing us hither and thither in whichever direction they push. And we have this beautiful, but awfully negative, idea that we are alive. We are no more alive than we shall be when we are dead. Therefore the Vedic sloka, one of the most famous Vedic slokas, says, *Utthishtatha* — arise. *Jagratha* — awake. Why should I awake if I am already awake? I mean, nobody would go and call somebody who has woken up and say, "Please wake up." You wouldn't do it as an ordinary human being pushed by his samskaras as a toy of nature, much less as some divine personality.

Therefore the truth is: we are really asleep. We are like sleepwalkers, people who walk in their sleep, somnambulists.

They are walking, they are muttering things, they are speaking, they are opening doors, they are closing doors, but they don't know what is happening. Next morning you tell them that they were doing all this. They say, "For heaven's sake, I couldn't be doing that."

So, the first realisation we have to understand, accept, however it may hurt our egos, is that we are dead persons pushed by samskaras. They motivate us into doing what we are doing, and to not do what we should be doing. And therefore, the first ritual or the first reality of that ritual, is to start a yogic process. "Where to find a guru? Where to find a system? There are so many." Well, let your intuition guide you. As Babuji Maharaj has said, "If you make a sincere prayer that, 'I may be guided to the right person,' the guru will come to your door." And I can testify to this from personal experience.

I started meditating when I was probably sixteen or seventeen years old, all by myself, from books, because I had a natural, I don't know, I can't call it craving, it's too big a word, shall we say an affection. I used to do all sorts of funny things, *hatha yoga*, *pranayama*, *asanas*. I was something of an admired person in my family, because nobody else did it. But it was all false. It was futile. That which does not yield fruit is a barren tree. It may have wonderful foliage, a beautiful canopy, a lovely trunk, beautiful roots. But did it yield? If it did not yield, it is a barren tree. So, an effort which does not produce anything is a waste of time. All my efforts produced something, in that eventually my Master came to me. Now, that is the grace of the Master. And perhaps, if one can be so conscious of it, or allowed to say it, a fruit of my sincerity in my search. Otherwise, we go around like children on these roundabouts, going round and round, a lot of speed, a lot of movement, but there all the time.

Most of us are moving like this, thinking like this, thinking round and round a problem, so that from whichever

aspect you look at it, you see the same thing. Like we see the same face of the moon all the time. It is turning round us, we are turning around ourselves. The whole thing is going round the solar system. And in the grand vision of the universe, even our galaxy is in movement. But yet, I see only the same face of the moon all the time. And people on the moon, on that side only will see me. The other side will never see us.

So you see, this funny thing: we are going round and round our problems in the same way. Therefore, we see the same thing all the time. We think we are thinking, but it produces no results. We are cogitating; no result. We are meditating; no result — because you are going round and round. Now this round and round — you know, we are not *tournesols* that you keep moving with the sun. We have to go straight. Round and round is useless. Straight will produce something, if at least to tell you you are going away from the goal and not towards the goal.

Now, how to find this straight way? Somebody must say, "This is the straight way." As I often tell young boys in India, if you come to Europe and you tell him, "You see there, that church on the left? That's where you have to go." And if I turn left on the highway, I may end up in Dijon or Marseilles. Because here, to go left, you have to often turn right and go a full circle round, and then come back into some other direction, take another highway. There turn right to go left again, and finally end up at a church which is one kilometre from where I see it, but for which I have to travel twelve kilometres by car.

Modern technology is very good. High tech is superb. But I am taken more and more away from my destination by these. This highway business is a very distinct example of this for me. I don't know whether it will appeal to you. You will only say, "This is an ignorant Indian who only can turn left and not right. He doesn't know how to go left by turning right." Thank heavens that I can still turn left and go left.

Otherwise it will be like Alice in Wonderland, you know, ending up where I don't want to end up. Finding empty teacups and dormice in them. All sorts of funny things. So, we have to find, in such a situation especially, we need a guide.

In simple societies, where everything is still simple, where life is simple, where the goal is simple because there is only one goal, it is easy to find guidance. In a complex society, where turning left may mean going back and coming all along, all the way again, after taking several turns in all directions, you will definitely need a guide. That is why in India we have no road maps. Here, you have lovely road maps. Even I buy them by the dozen, all the time. I don't know what I will do with them, but I am fascinated with road maps. At home I have a bunch of them: for Spain, for Portugal, for Italy. I assume, or pretend, that someday I will be going all alone and I will need these road maps. They are so glossy, so beautifully printed. Bartholomew's road maps. And I open them, and I fall prey to this eight franc business, or thirty-five franc business, buy one more, and put it away in my library.

He who does not need guidance should not seek guidance: first law. He who needs guidance must seek guidance: second law. Third law: Babuji Maharaj said, "Having found the guide, tie him to yourself with ropes of steel, so that you can never be parted." Absolute Law. So, we have to look. We have to look very hard. We have to look inside, because essentially the real guide is inside. The Master is inside. God is inside.

Therefore, to go out to look for him, whether in temples or other places of worship, is a lie against my native intelligence which says, "Fool, He is here. Why are you going outside?" If He is here, why should I seek Him outside? If I know my wife is in the kitchen cooking for me, I don't go out and look for her in the garden. If I know my child is sleeping in the cradle, I don't go to school and look for him. *"Je*

cherche mon fils." "Pourquoi?" "No, no, I just search, you know." "Yes, but your son is at home. You know it." "Yes, but you know there is a fun in searching. I also take a little walk, it helps my digestion." This is the way we fool ourselves. People who have a Master still go around finding or trying to find other Masters. Go to the Buddhists, go to Tao-te-Ching, go to shiatzu, go to I don't know what else, make a mess of themselves and come back to their original Master. Now he has to put together the broken pieces all over again. We find them in plenty in our satsangh. Of such people Christ said, "Ye of little faith," because it is faith that is lacking.

Now, how are you going to test a Master when you find him? By what standards will you test him? Can you adopt a standard of measurement? Can he be weighed in kilograms, or measured in metres? Or his love taken in gallons? If your inner intuition says you are with the right fellow, stick to him until you are capable of saying, "Yes, he is the right person." That answer also comes from inside. First it says, "Yes, it looks as if this is the fellow I need." Later, the voice says, "It looks more as if he is the person I need." Finally it says, "He is." And then one day, if you are successful in your search, you can let the outer Master go, and turn within, because He is there. He has always been there. It is His reflection you see outside.

So, essentially, we have to trust ourselves. In my search, if I depend on the Master to prove to me that he is the right Master, or for someone else to tell me he is the right Master for me, I am making the same mistake as when I go to a restaurant and some Frenchman orders escargot for me because it's a wonderful thing. He likes what he likes. You know, like when you have a dog, and it's very happy with you, it will bring you a bone. That which it likes best it brings and puts at your feet. But you don't immediately take it up and start chewing, and say, "Fido, wonderful gift you have brought me." We accept it, but we don't use it. Because that is its love. I must show my love in taking it and patting it on the head and

saying, "Ah, wonderful." And then, when it is not looking, I throw it out or bury it in the garden so that it can find it again and bring it back to me. In the same way children bring snails, they bring earthworms, butterflies. We see the love it brings, accept the love, but not the gift. Here we accept the gift but there is no love behind it, in most cases. When will you know the difference? When having taken the gift, you are unable to throw it away, that shows there was love behind it.

So, these are commonplace tests which your inner intuition should tell you how to apply. If the moment they come, and you don't even open it, "Oh, it's okay, you know, put it away," even your instinct tells you that it was nothing. Like they say, women know that the more expensive the gift that the husband brings, the more guilt he is trying to hide behind it. Women know this intuitively. Men know it, too. But women's intuition is made much of. I don't think men are less intuitive, but anyway, that's not the question here.

So, when my intuition tells me this fellow is possibly the good fellow who can guide me — accept him. Then judge by performance. "Am I progressing?" Now, before you ask yourself this question, there is a second question you should have asked first: "Am I doing that which he tells me to do?" Because, if you are not doing it, there can be no progress, and there is no use in blaming the guru for it. "Am I doing that which I am supposed to do? Am I refraining from doing those things which I'm not supposed to do?" In short, in brief, "Am I obedient?" If I am obedient, totally obedient, and after three months, four months, five months, I see nothing in myself, no change in myself, then run away from that fellow. He is useless, and you should have nothing more to do with him. It doesn't take very long: a few months, six months, eight months, no more. If then you find there is some change in yourself, continue, because you cannot judge the amount of change, the quantum of change, that should take place in a stipulated period of time, because you don't know what spirituality is, what are the dangers inherent in superlative

development. Especially in Sahaj Marg, where Babuji Maharaj has said that if too much is given it can shatter your nerves. The whole nervous system can be shattered.

But change you must perceive. If you are obedient, if you have practised sincerely, and if that change is lacking, then change your guru. But if you have been obedient and a sincere practicant of the system, and you find some change in yourself, then continue. Continue with more devotion to the practice. And then you will find that this is a sort of progressive thing, that every additional incremental change is much more than the previous increment of change. It is an exponential growth, as they say in mathematics. Not 2 plus 2 plus 2 plus 2, but 2 plus 4 plus 16 plus 256. That is how it goes in spirituality. And it must go like that.

Babuji Maharaj said, "Just turn your head from here to here, and you will find Him waiting there." If you don't find Him it is because you have not looked! You only turned from Jacky to Marie-Anne, and found Jacky here and Marie-Anne there, and then said, "Where is He?" You never looked for Him! So, the essence of the Master, the essence of the teaching of the Master, the purpose of His teaching, is to teach you to find Him who doesn't exist in the physical form, using His physical form as something of a guide for you to recognize Him by when you see Him inside. Not recognize in the conventional sense, but, like you recognize, for instance, a *charlotte,* if somebody is making it. "Ah-ha, a *charlotte.*" You can understand it. Pizza is cooking — I can tell you what pizza it is. I don't need to see it and to taste it. The smell is enough. This is a gastronomic expertise. But we must develop this expertise into a spiritual expertise. That wherever I see Him, in whichever form He appears, I must be able to recognize Him.

Now, this is unfortunately lacking. I have found Babuji Maharaj in certain situations where no abhyasi recognized him. They only saw him when he was sitting in his chair

giving sittings. If he changed his dress and walked on the streets, I have seen abhyasis passing by him without even noticing him. Then, because I am better known than he was, I mean in a worldly way, they saw me and then looked at Babuji, and said "Babuji, Babuji, Babuji, Babuji." If you cannot recognize your Master, what is the use?

Therefore, the heart must be used to create the reality which is within, to allow it to flow out of you, to create the Master outside of you. Recognize him when you see him. Accept him. Bind him to yourself. Use him, mercilessly use him. But only for spirituality. I use chillies only where I need chillies. I don't make ice cream with chillies. "Oh no, chillies are good. Put a couple of them in the ice cream. Put a few of them in the wine." It doesn't exist, you see.

Everything has its purpose. And for that purpose, it is excellent. The Master has a purpose. If you use Him for that purpose your life will be full of excellence.

Thank you.

15

THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION

Augerans, France
12 July, 1991

There is one more truth that Babuji Maharaj taught me about teachers and students. A real teacher continues to learn all his life. This may sound something rather strange, but a teacher who has stopped learning is unfit to continue to be a teacher. Students can stop learning, because often we learn for a purpose. We study engineering to become engineers. We study medicine to become doctors. But even there, the good ones continue to learn all their lives, learn from the experience of others, learn from their own experience. One must understand that books are only fossilized experiences of the earlier generations, and that they are as valuable as fossils are to the present generation.

It is perhaps the genius of mankind that because we have mastered speech thousands of years back, and later on we learned to write, and later on to print, we are able to preserve the experience of the past, so that it is available to the present generation. But to think that that past is something sacred, or has the authority of something other than just the experience of those who wrote those books, would again be absurd. This is no less true of religious experience.

All religious texts all over the world are nothing more than the statements of the experiences of the great persons of the past, the personalities of the past, the saints of the past. What they experienced, they wrote about. Based on their experience, they gave us some guidelines on how to live our lives. They should be treated as guidelines, not as rigid laws or the testaments into which they have become — very much a process of fossilization; becoming stone — petrification. If you have the best watermelon from seventy-seven million years ago in the form of a fossil, it is no good. We can say, "Yes, it only shows that watermelons existed seventy-seven million years ago." Similarly, the great truths of the past embodied in these texts prove to us there were spiritual persons who did have experiences, and who were kind enough to write them down for our sake, for our use, but we should use them only if they are useful to us today.

So, when we study these old texts, we should be very careful to evaluate their value in the current epoch in which we are alive, to assess their relevance to the ways in which we exist, and, most importantly, to test their validity in raising up to certain levels of spiritual heights. For instance, if our forefathers made fire by rubbing two sticks together, or the tinder and flint, we wouldn't duplicate it today. But yet, in the cigarette lighter of, say, fifteen years ago it was done. You had a flint, you had a wick. Friction was used to create the same thing. Principles are there, but the way in which they are applied changes. So, to go by the book as they say, to swear by the book, to follow the book, there is this danger that we will remain hooked to the past, unliberated from even our past. How can we be liberated in the present if we are not even going to be liberated from the past?

I think addiction to past frames of reference, past knowledge, past experience, is some sort of a samskara of the intellect. All samskaras are the same. So, when we have this tradition and this ritual of following the past: "Somebody said it some time ago, somebody said it two thousand years ago,

somebody said it ten thousand years ago," — age does not make anything better. Antiques you may collect because you have given them an artificial value. I don't think that they are in themselves valuable. But because it is rare, because it is old, we collect them. We create a value for them, very much like a piece of paper printed by a government has a value. It is a fictional valuation, and the price is whatever we choose to pay for it. If something is very rare, like the 'half-penny black' in stamps, maybe one or two in the whole world, it can sell for three hundred thousand dollars, three million dollars, maybe twenty million dollars sometime in the future. It only goes from bank vault to bank vault. Nobody ever sees it. Nobody ever uses it for centuries. Yet, it is gaining in value.

Once I read a story which was called *The Sleeper Awakes*, about a man who was interested in time travel, and mastered it. So he went back three centuries into the past, invested a sum of money in the bank in that period, and put himself to sleep. Three hundred years later when he woke up, he was the owner of the whole world, because that investment of three hundred years ago had grown and grown and grown.

Now, that is a fiction. But we do have something which grows like that [chuckles] from the past, growing and growing and growing because of the interest we accumulate, and that is our samskara. [chuckles] And the interest that is multiplying is the interest that we take in our samskaras. Now you can rebel and say, "How can I take interest in my samskara?" Yes, because when the samskara is making you do something, and you take interest in that, and it forms some more impression upon you, and that solidifies, it becomes a bigger samskara. The capital has indeed been added onto by the interest. It is a very strange law that the law of economics works, too, in spirituality, but works against us. So, we should not take interest in certain things, but we should take interest in certain other things.

So, coming back to this business of the past and its hold upon us — why we are held on to them is due to several different reasons. The first is our own reverence. We may not love our grandfather, but we do what he did. We don't love our great-grandfather. Perhaps we don't even know his name. But because he did it, my grandfather did it. Because he did it, my father did it. Because they all did it, I do it. And what do I do? I ritualize my life.

So you see, generation after generation these original truths become more and more solid, more and more ritualistic, with less and less meaning in them, less and less of content in them, less and less of effectiveness in them, until we have rituals which are meaningless, with no effect, but which bind us by their force and their power which we give to them. This is itself a samskara.

There is a great story which perhaps I have already told you, I don't know, about the value of a *shastra*. A shastra is a religious text or a body of teaching. This story concerns one guru who had his own guru. This junior guru was going to meet his senior guru. And just when he arrived at his house, the senior guru walked out, circumambulated the junior guru three times, prostrated before him, put his head on his feet, in obeisance, as we say in English, and went into the house and started lecturing to his disciples. The disciples were shocked. How can the senior guru prostrate before the junior guru — his own disciple? So they asked the junior fellow, "How is this possible? Your master coming and falling before you like this?" This man answered, "A guru can do anything; he is the master." They were not satisfied. So, they went to the senior guru inside, and they said, "Master, you did this to your own disciple, who is our spiritual brother. How could you do this?" He said, "Oh, did I do it? I didn't do it." They said, "No, no. But we saw you doing it." Then he said, "Oh, I saw my guru there, so it was natural for me to go around him three times, and fall at his feet, and touch my head with his feet." So they said, "This fellow is also bluffing, let us go back to the junior

fellow." They went back to the junior fellow and said, "Whatever it is, you said the Master can do anything. But is it not against the shastra? Is it not against the spiritual law, the religious law?" That man said a great truth. He said, "When you have a living Master, shastra has no meaning. He is the creator of shastra for your existence."

You see, it is a great truth. But, if you only have the old texts and no guru, you have no choice but to follow the texts. But then the texts don't speak to us. There is no intercommunication. They are only printed words. Often we don't know the language. Generally we don't know their meaning. We don't know the archaic meaning of what they meant — old Greek, old Latin, old Persian, old Hebrew, old Sanskrit. Who knows these languages? So, we start memorizing them and repeating them. "Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread," etc., and think that we have prayed, that our spiritual duty to God and to ourselves is over. But we remain as miserable as we were before the prayer, before all the prayers we have been doing for years and years and years.

So you see, this is how texts defeat our purpose. Then, they were written for a time, for a special epoch of the past, when this relevance was there to that period. But we are living in a different time, in a different world, under different circumstances. Therefore Babuji Maharaj said, "Lalaji rediscovered Sahaj Marg, and moulded it to the needs of the time." It is essential to remember that the system must conform to the time in which we are alive. So, that the situation in which we are placed in our temporal existence must enable us to do these things satisfactorily, continuously, regularly, effectively. Otherwise, there is no use.

So, this is the problem of religion. Religion keeps us bound to the past, chained to the past, chained to the sins of Adam and Eve; if they have sinned! I don't think they have.

The doctrine of Original Sin, that ever since that time we have been falling and falling and falling — this philosophy, this theology, is anti-evolutionary, first. Second, it is demeaning. Third, it makes us useless to ourselves. Fourth, it makes us so impotent that we can do nothing for ourselves. And fifth, it binds us as slaves to a church which should liberate us. Five very important reasons why we should get away from the religious bondage, the thraldom of religion, which is holding us in greater slavery than the Romans ever held their slaves in, or the Greeks, or the Egyptians.

We are not preaching against religion, we are only pointing out the facts of religion. If rituals could liberate, there should be no more human beings here. I mean, after millions of years, and thousands of years of praying and preaching, and attending these religious institutions — whether a church or a temple, it doesn't matter — what are we still doing here?

So you see, we have to judge these things not emotionally, but practically. Is it good for me? Is it doing any good to me? Have I developed an iota on the way? Am I today at least one centimetre in advance of where I was yesterday? If the answer is no, we have to change. If I am sitting in the TGV in the Gare de Lyon in Paris, and I am always there, it is no good to me that the great SNCF of France is running the best trains in the world if that particular train doesn't move for me. If it is to leave at 12:25, well 12:27, 12:40, 12:50, it doesn't matter. But it must move. If at three o'clock it is still there, there is certainly something wrong. If at three o'clock I am still in it, I am a fool.

This is the same story with religion. We are all still in that religion, as I said yesterday. I would like today to quote Swami Vivekananda: "It is good to be born in a religion, but it is bad to die in a religion." It is a profound statement that few people have understood. It means that I start off with something — a capital, a heritage, a system of philosophy, but I have to grow out of it like out of anything else.

In the theory of metempsychosis, loosely called reincarnation, this is the value of death itself: that I finish my existence in one body. Its purpose is finished. It can be useful to me no more. It has now become a bondage, a prison. I escape out of it. I get out of it by a voluntary act. Though we don't know it in our lower consciousness, it is always a voluntary act. And we choose another body if we have still to continue on this terrestrial existence, so that we may continue to evolve further. It is like class after class after class in schools and colleges. It is like grade after grade after grade of promotion in the army. When I am promoted from the first class to the second class in school, I don't think I'm dead. I don't weep that I cannot be with the teacher of the first class any more. I don't get attached to the bench on which I was sitting in that classroom. I am happy to be out of it.

The soul, too, is happy when we die. When any human being dies, if you watch the face of the person after death, you will find the utmost peace and tranquillity on the face of that body, which you never see during his lifetime. This is a fact. It is the truth. People must have the courage to look at dead bodies. And this drama of dressing up the dead body — colouring it, rouging it, shaving it, presenting it like a gentleman or a gentlewoman, is crazy. Even in death, we are cheating life. A dead body is no less beautiful than a newly born baby, if you have the eyes to see, if you can see that utter peace, that utter relaxation — after which there is a yoga asana called the *shavaasana* in the Patanjali yoga system of hatha yoga. Shavaasana means the asana of the corpse, the dead body. It teaches us to lie as still and as relaxed, as utterly relaxed as a dead body. And if you are able to do it for ten or fifteen minutes, you don't need pills, you don't need doctors, you don't need psychotherapists, you don't need anything. But it is so difficult, because in a sense it is like dying while you are still alive, which is what Babuji says of the spiritual condition, 'the living dead.'

So you see, the whole thrust of spirituality is to die without dying, whereas the whole thrust of religion seems to be to live without living. And these are two opposite streams of thought, of practice, of theology, of teaching, of achievement. One lives without living, therefore he is dead even while he's alive. The other dies without dying, therefore he is alive even when he is dead. That is redemption. So, what is the difference between religion and spirituality? You must be able to say this when people ask you what is the difference, what are you talking of? **This** is religion. **This** is spirituality.

To me, the biggest mistake, the biggest and saddest part of religion, is that it seeks to re-connect us to God. I question this re-connection. If I can be disconnected from God even for one billionth of a second, I wouldn't exist. Then where is the question of re-connecting? I mean, it is a total lie. And we have been living this lie, accepting this lie, swallowing this lie, suffering with this lie, feeling a disconnection from God, which can never be, all because we are taught to feel that way — therefore much of the misery on earth. If we feel we are disconnected, we are also morally disconnected. Therefore we feel, "When God is not there, what in heaven does it matter what I do?" We are able to sin with impunity, commit crimes with impunity, because God is not there. "When I am reconnected with Him, I shall get myself absolved of all my sins, and on a Friday go to church for a confession. It's over, you see!"

This question of re-connecting with God is of the utmost importance, because there can never be a re-connecting, because that connection can never be broken, being myself part of that divinity from eternity to eternity. Otherwise we wouldn't be here. We may feel it or we may not feel it. When we don't feel it, we are ignorant. When we feel it, we are beginning to be spiritual. Spirituality teaches us to feel ourselves in our Self, by turning our attention inwards, imagining the divine presence in the heart as brilliant light, divine light. Slowly, by meditation, repeated meditation,

deeper and deeper meditation, we can become merged in that presence. Eventually, not being conscious that you are here at all, we achieve what we call the *samadhi* state. And then you wonder what this is all about. It is better to sit and meditate and be lost to this world. "It is so nice. Why did you stop the meditation?" People ask, "Why did you end the sitting? It was so wonderful. I was so absorbed. I didn't know whether I was sleeping or in the samadhi state."

Now, which religion has ever given you this condition? It only teaches you to worship a statue or an icon. Kiss it, perhaps. Have it put on your head in blessing, and you walk out leaving it there and yourself here. Religion disconnects us again and again from our source. Spirituality connects us once and for all, with the very first sitting. Thereafter that connection is being deepened and deepened. Deepened until in my final merger with that, I am the Absolute all over again.

So you see, it is very important to realise the differences between religion and spirituality. I mean volumes can be written about the differences. "Thou shalt not sin against God," religion says. Spirituality says, "Don't sin against your Self." "Don't tell lies to God," says religion. "Don't tell lies to your Self," says spirituality. If you just think of it without becoming emotional, and involved with your religion and your God, which is another lie — how can you have your religion and your God? Your God must be my God. The names may be different. You may call Him something, I may call Him something. But if there is only one God, there can be only one Absolute, there can only be one Infinite. How can your God of Christianity be different from my God of Hinduism, or the Muslim's God? They are all the same, but we have always been quarrelling from time immemorial.

Religion has incited people to war and victories over each other, in the name of God, killing in the name of God, crucifying in the name of God, dividing man from man, woman from woman, human being from human being, until

we end up with racial hatred, religious hatred, all in the name of God. "Oh, God of Abraham," says the Jew. He doesn't know who Abraham is. He doesn't know who is the God of Abraham. "The nameless one," yes, that is correct, because God can have no name. But if I use a wall, even though it is blank, no pictures, yet it is a petrification of this concept. Why should I need a wall?

So you see, Babuji Maharaj said, "Religions divide." When we sit in meditation, there is no God with a name, there is no God with any form. There is God without attributes. It is the absolute abstract. This unites. Otherwise, we cannot have fifteen nationalities, twenty-five nationalities, sitting in one audience all meditating upon the same thing. I have seen what they call Universal Temples of God. But you go into the temple, there is a statue of the Buddha, there is a statue of Krishna, there is a Shiva, there is a Christ on his cross. Again, you see, they are divided in one church, one temple, one place of worship.

True unity of human beings can only come through the heart, and that unity of the heart can only come by the recognition of the innermost Self which is divine, seated there. Your Self is no different from my Self, is no different from anybody else's Self here. With this recognition of the essence of the Self, which is universal, which is in all things, not only do we become members of one human race, but we also learn to identify ourselves with every form of existence on earth. Whether it be stone, whether it be tree, bird, animal, it doesn't matter, because that same Self is in the heart of that, too.

But, religion divides humanity from the rest of creation. "Oh, God of Abraham." Why not, "Oh, God of the Lion," "Oh, God of the Sheep?" Why not, "Oh, God of the mountain?" After all, Moses did go up the mountain and find God there. So you see, religion not only divides human being from human being, but human being from everything else, so that, essentially, each human being stands alone as an

individual, isolated, lonely, suffering island. We have no companionship. We have no confidence. Our self-confidence is gone. Our confidence in everybody else is gone, and we have no God to turn to because he is in some blessed temple or other place. And therefore, if I cannot walk, my legs are amputated, I have cancer, I have to be in bed — I am literally dying Godless. What a tragedy this has become. Utter tragedy, ultimate tragedy, desolation, despair, the ultimate darkness.

Now, what is there to believe in in spirituality? Religion requires belief. Religion requires faith. Spirituality requires nothing. Spirituality requires you, and your aspiration to become a perfect you. If there is an individual who is aspiring to become perfect, he is fit for spirituality. What does he need? To sit and meditate. On what? On the abstract in the heart. But how can we meditate on the abstract? Use the divine light. Because light, according to my Master, is not, in a sense, physical. It has no form, no name, no attributes, etc. It is nearest to the spiritual ultimacy. If you are able to do that sincerely, knowing that you are going to benefit from it and nobody else, knowing that you are going to grow spiritually and nobody else — if you meditate, I cannot become spiritual. If I meditate, you cannot become spiritual.

This system of spirituality puts the responsibility back right where it belongs. Instead of becoming beggarly seekers of benefits in places of worship, praying on our knees, grovelling before priests, weeping and beating our breasts with guilt, spirituality says, "My son, sit where you are. Put yourself into your heart. Meditate there. Find Him who is always there. And since He is you, how can He be anything other than what you are? How can you be anything other than what He is?" That is the moment when this flash of illumination comes, and you say, "I am everything. I am not God, but I am divine. I am God-like. I am blessed, for today, in me, I find Him whom I have been seeking throughout the universe all my life." Or so many lives — who knows, you see?

So, these are the differences between religion and spirituality. Why one should be chosen against the other is not a matter of sentiment, or emotion, or even of tradition. Tradition may be good, but it is useless. Everything good is not useful. A nice bit of diamond is good, you see. Twenty-five karats, I would love to have one. But if I am on a desert island with nothing to eat, that diamond is as useless to me as anything else. What is truly useful to me, I must understand; what it is good to have, and be feeling happy about, is something else — diamonds, furs, silks, you know, good houses, cars.

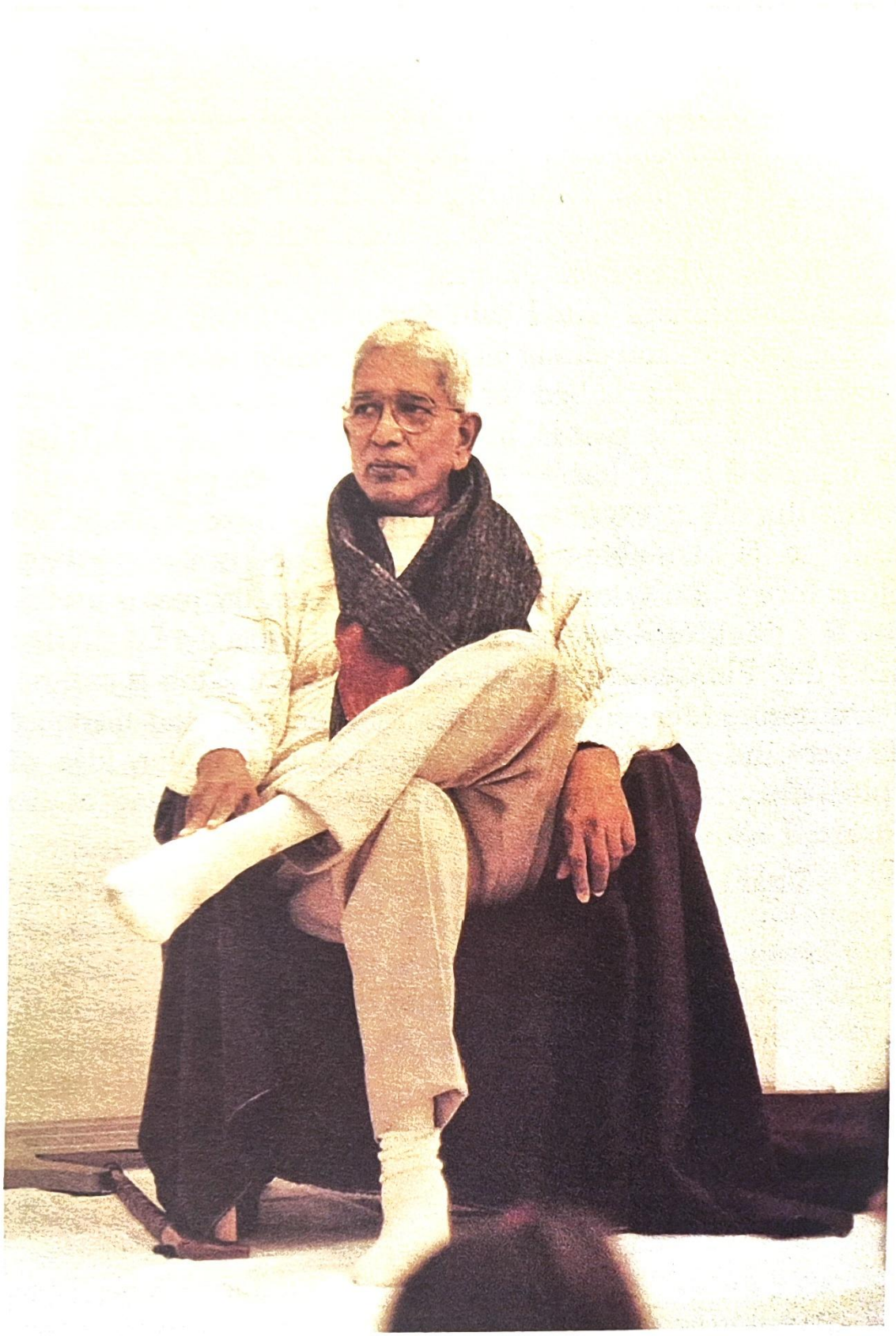
We must always distinguish between what is useful and effective, and what is just good. Everything in the world is good. Everything in nature is good. God created nothing bad. He could not have created anything bad. Even poison cannot be bad. But He did create a law that certain things don't go together, like a human being and corruption. They don't go together. If the Old Testament is right when it says, "God created man in His own image," then we cannot be corrupt, we cannot be vicious, we cannot be cruel. Therefore, when we have these Commandments which say, "Don't do this, don't do that," it only means, "Do what I have to do. Be divine in your essence. Be loving, be compassionate, be merciful. Treat everything as yourself." Not as part of yourself, not just as brothers and sisters, because brothers and sisters quarrel more than anybody else. I have not found a brother loving a brother or a sister loving a sister yet, and this is as old as the story of Cain and Abel.

I think sometimes that in spiritual brotherhoods also we fail because we are still thinking of that brotherhood — the blood brothers, where we are always quarrelling, fighting with each other, claiming the property of the parents. This is a different type of brotherhood where I see my Self in you. And you must similarly learn to see your Self in me. Therefore, it is the Self that you love when you look at somebody else. And

this Self eventually becomes not your self or my self, but The Self, the reflection of the ultimate in our heart.

So, this is the extraordinarily moving and ennobling adventure of the spiritual life. Any spiritual embarkee, let us say, one who embarks on the spiritual life, if he is still thinking of the past, is denying himself or herself the spiritual prosperity of the future. The greatest truth of spirituality is, "Cut yourself free from the past." All of the past. You cannot select. Otherwise, like I said yesterday, if you vomit, you cannot choose something there to eat again saying, "This is good for me, that is bad for me. Let me swallow this." Once out, it is out. The past is, in a sense, an excreta of time. It has been passed off. It has been excreted out of the present. And it is as valuable as excreta. It can manure my fields. It should not hold me. If I am able to use it, "Well, I did this; it was wrong. Therefore I don't do it again," in that sense, the past is useful. But if I think of it and say, "Oh, my God, what did I do? What did I do? Please help me. Please forgive me...," this is useless. I am going deeper and deeper into the past, and therefore deeper and deeper into sin. Because this, in the idea of spirituality, is the only sin: that instead of thinking of the future, I am with the past.

Thank you.



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MEDITATION: A TRAINING IN DYING

Augerans, France
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I would like to go further in this matter of religion, and try to examine what we should do with religion. I don't know whether we can do anything, but whether we should. First of all, I'm a little sorry that nowadays people blame religions when they move out of whatever religion they have been practising. Religion is not to blame. It is like saying that there should be no atoms, then there would not have been atom bombs. Nature creates atoms, human beings create atom bombs. It is the human being we must blame, not nature. Similarly, nature creates poisons for its own purpose. What is poison to me is very necessary for the snake, because it has to live, it has to exist, it has to kill to eat.

Religions have developed according to the need of the time, like everything else. Primitive religions are primitive because they were useful to primitive human beings. To us they are primitive, but to them they were current. If we could travel back in time twenty thousand years, thirty thousand years back, and be with those primitive people, who had that primitive worship of those times, we would not say they were primitive. They would have been modern.

The second thing to remember is that religion as a body, as an organized body, came into existence only long after human beings came. As Babuji Maharaj said, the Vedas are not the beginning of Hinduism. There must have been something before the Vedas. They were not written, they were not spoken. But God has always been there. And ever since man came into existence, he must have had some idea of this divinity. Not clear, primitive, but yet some idea. Like children's idea of their parents changes as the children grow. A father to a three year old child is not the same as a father to a teenager, nor the father to a person of sixty years. The son is the same, the father is the same, but the relationship is changing all the time. What we seek from them is changing all the time. What a son wants from his father when he is three, he doesn't need any more when he is sixty.

So, the idea that religions have developed according to the need of the people of those times is a very truthful idea, and a very valid idea, too, I should say. Because after all, we can only seek what we seek. We must also be taught what we should seek. When in the Bible it says, "Seek and ye shall find," it is implicit in that statement, at least to my understanding, that we shall only find what we seek, nothing more.

If you seek peace in a church, you will find peace. If you go there asking for nice church music, you'll find that. Stained glass windows? You'll find that, too. If you want to find a place for confession, it is there. But if you want to find God, no doubt you will find Him. "Seek and ye shall find." It is implicit. In fact, it must be re-worded to read, "Ye shall find what ye seek." If in food you seek pleasure, you'll find pleasure, though it is followed by pain. If you want nourishment, you will seek the right food for that. If you want growth, you will seek according to that. If you want health, you will seek according to that.

This is one great truth that spirituality offers very clearly, that you will not find anything which you don't seek. Or, to put it in another way, you can find only that which you seek. You seek pleasure in a situation, sure it is there. In the same situation if you seek pain, it is also there. Now, the two are always part of the same thing. A nice pizza, the pleasure is there. The pain of indigestion is later there. The wise man says, "Well, the pleasure is first, but the pain is second. So, let me avoid the pleasure so that I can avoid the pain." The man who cannot think beyond his nose, he says, "So what. Let me have the pleasure first, then we shall see about the rest later. There are doctors. There are medicaments. And, we can always assuage the situation by having another pizza tomorrow." So, they are the real people who are going round and round in this circle of cause and effect, pain and pleasure, suffering, misery and happiness. So, when he says, "Seek and ye shall find," it means please learn to seek correctly, so that you can find that which is good for you, that which is capable of making you grow.

Now, when we look into religion for the causes of our suffering, they are there in plenty. Christ suffered. He suffered all his life. He was crucified — the ultimate pain of crucifixion, the ultimate pain of betrayal by one of his twelve disciples, the pain of being let down by his own race, the Jews, the pain of betrayal by the Romans, who could have given him justice, but they washed their hands of the whole affair. His life was one of pain and suffering. So, when we think of Christ, and we say, "No, no. What sort of an example are you setting before me? Do you also want me to suffer, and to be betrayed, and to die on the cross?" Yes! If you want to find what he found, yes. What did he find? He found also his God, you see. He found the foolishness of humanity. He did not worry about it, he was not sorry about it, because he said this is the level of human beings in the ordinary state. He found it possible for himself to rise above them, and to try to raise them to his levels. This entails sorrows, of course. Like if a

woman wants to have a child, she has to bear the pain of childbirth.

I have said this before, and I must repeat it again today, that all creative acts have pain as their fundamental base. He who seeks to avoid pain can never be creative. In any sense. Any creation. All creativity is based on suffering, on pain, on rejection. Therefore, you cannot have one without the other. He found all these things and was able to live with that suffering of pain, of rejection, of betrayal, only because he was able to love. So, his life teaches us that love can enable us to bear everything. Without love, we think of ourselves. With love, we think of everybody else. So, love should make you outward oriented, "Not me, but everybody else." The absence of love makes us self-centred, selfish.

There is no need to diverge any more into this and to try to prove that this is true. Selfishness is a lack of love, even of the self. You cannot love everybody and not love yourself. Therefore, when we are selfish and we indulge in things which we know are destructive, which we know are going to destroy us, it means we don't love ourselves. On the contrary, we hate ourselves, and the hatred is so subtle that it becomes a sort of a self-destructive, suicidal attempt to drink one's self to death, to drug one's self to death.

So, all selfishness is self-hatred. This is my opinion, and I am quite sure this is right. Whereas if you love, you must love yourself, too. If you love yourself, you cannot do crazy things with your self. You cannot destroy yourself. Then comes the question of finding the reality of your existence. What are you here for? Where are you to go? It's no use asking, "*Quo vadis Domini*?" He knows where He is going. I must know where I am going. "*Quo vadis Domini*?" What for? It's a crazy question, you see, "Where are you going, God?" God doesn't go anywhere, doesn't come from anywhere. He is everywhere at all times. So, where can He go, where can He

come from? So "*Quo vadis*" and put your name in front of it — then it makes some sense.

To use religion we must know how to use it correctly, wisely. There are the wrong examples, there are the right examples. But the problem always is that if the religion has become fixed to a particular time in the past, then it can only serve the needs of that time, not of this time. This is implicit in religion. A religion created for two thousand years ago, for a society of two thousand years ago, cannot be suitable to us today. The body of a man who died two thousand years ago cannot be used today. The bread that was baked two thousand years ago cannot be eaten today. We have to understand that, like agricultural crops grow on the soil of today, they have to grow on the soil of today, we too must live and grow in the soil of our societies, where we are born on this earth of today. Therefore, religion has to be left behind unless that religion is able to change with time, refine its ways of approach to divinity, its approach to the worshippers, and offer something that is possible of practise, capable of being practised, and which is effective for our needs of today.

Therefore, it is not religions which are wrong. It is **we** who are wrong in sticking to religions of the past. The religion is blameless. The shirt that I wore when I was three years old I cannot use today. It is not the fault of the shirt. It was good for me when I was three years old. I had a different set of clothes when I was ten, and sixteen. They are no more useful to me because they don't fit. Qualitatively they may be good. It is still the same silk, the same leather for the shoes, but they don't fit. Does my religion of the past fit my needs of today? If it does, continue. If it does not, stop. This is the truth of religions. We should not revile religions. We should not speak against religions. Because they were holy, and they are holy, in the sense that their thought and their efforts were with the holy, or the holy ideals of Godhead.

If people were ignorant, and they worshipped strength — we have Hanuman in India, the god of strength, we have Ganesha, the elephant god — these are the crude ideas of the past. Like the Masai, the people of the Masai tribes of Africa, they killed a lion, took out its heart and ate it, thinking that by eating the heart of a lion, each individual human being would become lion-hearted. It is not possible.

So you see, this crudity is there, embedded in the past because people were crude. They had no intellect, they had no developed intellect. They had an association with nature at the basest possible level. I don't mean base in quality, but base as a base, at the lowest level. Where you had to interact with tigers and lions and monkeys and other people like yourself: half animal, half human being. And they tailored their approach to those times when there was no language, there was no understanding. The ability to philosophize had not yet come. The ability to think in the abstract was not there. People could not count beyond five or ten.

So, those religions were for people of those times, and rightly the people themselves developed something that was useful for them. Subsequent ages saw people developing what was useful for them in that time, in that epoch, in that society. We have to develop something which is good for us in our time, in our epoch, in our society. Therefore spirituality.

So you see, there is no use in thinking that Christianity is useless, Hinduism is stupid. Nothing is useless, nothing is stupid. Everything was useful at one time. Everything is useful at one time. Everything will be useful at some time. But out of all this wealth of this universe, I have to use what is useful to me **today**. In this lies our wisdom. There is no use in calling ourselves advanced human beings, intellectual human beings, educated human beings, belonging to high-tech societies where every child uses a computer today. And yet we think superstitiously of the past, superstitiously of the dark, afraid of death, fear of death. Which only means that when you scratch

your skin, as we say in India, you are still a superstitious Neanderthal, nothing more.

All our civilization, our education, our high-tech societies are only superficial. Now we have to convert this superficiality of modern technology, knowledge, wisdom, and try to embed it in our core, in the core of my being, which again is why we meditate. We meditate with a developed mind, with a conscious mind, a mind which is far more conscious today than it was say three to five thousand years ago, ten thousand years ago. And with that enlarged consciousness, with our advanced ideas of what a God must be — not just a doler-out of goodies, not just one who will say, "I pardon you," not somebody who will just eradicate all problems from my life or remove all obstructions from my path, but a God who will represent to me the ultimate goodness of existence, and pull me up to Himself — we must meditate.

Therefore spirituality, especially Sahaj Marg says, "Don't ask in your prayers." "Prayer is begging," Babuji Maharaj says. But we continue to beg. When we beg, we are beggars, whatever else we may be. We may be wise beggars, professorial beggars, beautiful beggars, advanced beggars, kingly beggars — but we are still beggars. And, if I am a beggar, whatever else I may be, I am nothing else; I am only a beggar. And if, as spirituality says, "Not fear, but love should be your relationship with God," then when we are begging, we are denying that love. Lovers don't beg. Your child doesn't beg from you. He doesn't fall on his knees and say, "Oh, beloved mother, bless me with my next meal. I have sinned. I have gone against thee. I have disobeyed thy orders. Forgive me for all these trespasses, and bless me with my divine meal. And please mother, make it palatable, let there be ice cream in it." We don't say all these things because the mother is mine, the food that she cooks is mine, by birthright, as we call it.

Birthright means the right derived by being born. If I am born to a particular woman, that woman is my birthright. By birthright she is my mother. By birthright everything she has is mine. I don't have to beg. I don't even have to ask. I can just take what I need. And, if the truth that we are all born of the ultimate source makes that also our birthright, then God is my birthright. Who can deny this truth? If He is mine by birthright, He is my father or my mother, whichever way you may choose to think. Then why beg from Him? Why try to steal from Him? Why try to cheat Him? Why not just go about like a son and take? Therefore Babuji Maharaj said, "Loot me." If you ask your father for pocket money, he may give you ten francs. So, don't ask. Just say, "Papa, I need some money, I'm taking it." 'Taking it' is enough. And he will smile and say, "This blighter is trying to be too wise." But he will not object.

So you see, in denying God as a total presence always around me, always with me, always in me, I am denying my birthright, I am denying my very birth itself. I am making myself an orphan, a spiritual orphan, cut away from its source, not knowing where its home is, not knowing who its father and mother are. Therefore we are lonely, we feel outcast, we suffer, and we are afraid. So, this connection, which religion pretends to make and cause a re-connection, is an everlasting connection. We don't have to try to find it again, or to do it again, but to realise that it is there. Therefore, religion deals with redemption and deliverance; spirituality deals with realisation. I **realise** that I have always been with Him. Or better still, that He has always been with me. He has always been in me. That without Him in me I could not exist.

You know, like we exist in time. Anything which exists, anything of which you say, "This exists," must have an existence in time. Otherwise it cannot exist. It may be one billionth of one billionth of one billionth of a second, yet if it exists, it must have that existence in time. Similarly, anything which exists must exist in Him, because He is time. According

to the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says, "I am Time." Time infinite, time immutable, time indestructible, time eternal. Where time itself becomes a dimension of His existence, and not he himself.

Therefore, spirituality confers upon us this eternality, this mastery of time. That means one who is the master of time, he is the master of his past, his present, and his future. And therefore we are eternal, we are existing not in the past, nor in the present, nor in the future. Because, like when you say, "This is my house," there are rooms in which you are not physically at the moment. Now, this château is ours, but we are only in this tent. But yet we say that this is our château. I am everywhere in this château, and so are you. So, this eternality as a concept must become eternality as an experience of the self, which means all barriers to this perception, this feeling, must go.

What are the barriers? That I am I alone. That I am for myself alone. That I am imprisoned in this body. That I am born at one time and die at another time. All these concepts of space and time are imprisoning us within a confined consciousness, an imprisoned consciousness. Therefore, being in prison within our own consciousness, we are prisoners of the self. Therefore, this small self must be destroyed. The prison is broken. The truly infinite Self comes into exposure. It is as if this self is blocking that Self. You know, like you can block the sun with a coin. It doesn't require another object the size of the sun to block the sun. You can just put your thumb against it [holds thumb in front of eye] and it is blocked. This little stupid thumb can block out the sun. So, is this little stupid thumb great? Can you go around saying, "Look at my thumb. I can block the sun with this."

Similarly, with our little stupid selves, the lower selves, we are blocking divinity, and feeling proud and saying, "I don't need God. I am great. I belong to the Occidental races, the developed races. Infinite knowledge. Infinite wealth.

Infinitely destructive powers. Bombs which can destroy half the world today." Perhaps in the next ten years, which can break the earth into two, or into four or into fifteen, it doesn't matter. If it is broken, we are all dead. This is our pride, you see. Our pride lies not in creation but in destruction. Christ said, "I come not to destroy but to fulfil." The modern anti-Christ must say, "I come not to fulfil, but to destroy."

So this has become the cult. This has become the religion of the West you see. Destruction! Destruction of what? Of your higher Self. And aggrandizement of the lower self so that, today, each individual self feels it is the most important thing, it must be satisfied, it must be fulfilled, it must have its pleasure. That is ultimate selfishness. Total self-involvement. Total self-centredness. So that today we think of nothing else but ourselves. "If a million people are dying, so what? They are stupid, they are crazy, they have no education, they are black. So, let them die. So long as I am alive, so long as my house is safe, it is heated well in winter, cooled well in summer, so that my pantries are full, my gas connection is there, I can dial anywhere in the world. What matters the rest of the world?" Forgetting that if eighty-five percent of this human race is to be destroyed, you would have very little left to connect with.

The beauty of the tree, its leaves and its flowers, is in the buried roots of that tree. Suppose the beauty of the tree were to say, "Cut off these roots of mine, because every time a man digs there, he sees these ugly tendrils of the roots, going about here and there, feeding on that dirty slush and mud. I want to be beautiful, I don't want corruption as my base." What do you think would happen if the roots were cut off? The roots of your existence are in all of humanity. The roots of your wealth are in the whole world. The roots of your being are on this planet. And the root, if it exists, of your liberation, is from this human source, which is a total source, which cannot be partialized or compartmentalized into Occident and Orient, and all these stupid things. Either I am a part of humanity, a

human being, drawing my sustenance from the whole human race, evolving out of that enormous wealth of beauty and love and charity and mercy into something divine, or if I cut myself, I cut my Self into two.

Therefore spirituality says, "No differences." It is no use sitting here and saying, "You know, Sahaj Marg is a wonderful system — no differences of race, caste, colour, creed, sex, etc.," if you don't practise this outside this château. Here we are all one. Or at least apparently one. Are we continuing this outside? If you look at a black beggar on the street, with leprosy, will you be charitable towards him? Will you give him a hundred francs and say, "Brother, go and have a pizza." Or will you say, "Sheee, get out of my sight, you dirty rascal." Which will you do? That is the test of your faith. That is the test of your truthfulness to yourself. That is the test of the way in which Sahaj Marg must mould you.

It is not enough to practise it here. It is necessary to practise it out in the world, speak about it in the world, see that other people change in this way. Remembering that a tree may give a thousand seeds, only that the thousand seeds may give a thousand trees which will again give a thousand seeds each. Otherwise a barren tree is of no use. It is only fit to be cut and to be used as firewood. If you are barren in the sense that you don't produce that from which you have grown yourself, you are a lie to yourself. You are a living lie. You are cheating destiny. You are cheating God. You are cheating the human race of that which you should give to them, many-fold, having received something from here.

"Go forth and multiply," did not mean go forth and have fun and have many children through many wives. It is a very convenient interpretation of that sentence. "Go forth and multiply," to me means, "Go forth and multiply that which I have given you." It is too convenient to think this gives us a sexual freedom and license, to sleep around and breed, as they say in India, like pigs. "Go forth and multiply," means

multiply the wealth that I have endowed you with. Multiply the knowledge that I have blessed you with. Multiply the benefits that you have received from me so that you may give, remembering the law that one who has received must in turn give. If he keeps, then he will be lost. That which he has got will be taken away. This is the law. One cannot controvert it. One may go against civil laws: "*Rappel* 130", you can drive at 160. After all, when the policeman catches you, you will only pay a fine. It doesn't matter, you see. But divine law, spiritual law: that what I have given, you must multiply in yourself and distribute so that they may receive, multiply it in themselves, and distribute in turn, so that one giver can produce millions of people who are benefited from that — if this law is broken, if this chain of receiving and continuing to give is broken, there ends civilization.

Civilization is not in having cars, and atomic power plants, and beautiful trains and planes. Civilization is in receiving from there and giving here, very much like power plants give power. Transforming stations reduce the voltage, or whatever it is, to distribute. Therefore, you have the giving organization, the distributing authority, and the receptive recipients. If we fail in this duty, we fail for ourselves, too. Because then that which you have received will be of no use to you too. Water must flow. Flowing water is clean; stagnant water stinks.

So, this is the spiritual law. And if one is able to do this with faith, with courage, most of all with love — because only love can make us give what we have — and if with love you give, you will find that the more you give, the more you receive. Ultimately, nature finds a person who is able to give without restraint, without thought of the self, and he becomes a conduit for the divine. Such persons are fit to be called, are really fit to be called, saints, masters. Not those sanctified after they have died three hundred years later. How can a saint be a saint in retrospect? I mean, it is a parody of the truth. That so-and-so lived in 1780, and today, some authority decides to

make him a saint, and we have one more saint in the tradition, one more feast for that saint in the calendar, and everything is nice.

If He gives me without thinking of what I am, whether I am fit to receive it or not, I should also not think when I give, whether you are fit to receive or not. God cannot think. God does not think. For Him, everything in this universe is His. They are all His children. One child is black, one is white, one is tall, one is fat, one is thin, one is stupid, one has intelligence. But God cannot say, "Throw away this stupid child. Finish it off. One child less to bother with." We cannot say it either. There are mothers who are unfortunate enough to have children who are cripples, who are cretins. But you don't immediately put it in the gas chamber and finish it off. It would be easy. Life would be better. But that is the secret of existence, you see, that when you suffer for another, your life is ennobled. You suffer because you love. And it is not the suffering that ennobles, it is the love which ennobles. Suffering and love go together. Pleasure and love, well, it's not true, it's not correct. And when you find pleasure and love, you should be a little suspicious about it.

Now, there is one thing more, that people are afraid of death, as we started saying, precisely because we think we are born, and that is a happy occasion, and when we are dead, it is a miserable occasion. Even in books by very important authors, I find this concept in the Western publications, that we are here only to be miserably polished off by some insensate and blind fate. I don't know how so-called intelligent people have this thought that, "Destiny is against me, that God is a vicious being, cruel, playing with me like a cat playing with a mouse." How can people think like this? I don't know. I have read very important authors who write in this fashion. God should have mercy on them. But the whole thing is, "Because I think I am alive only when I am in the body, I am happy with my birth and sad about my death."

Now, how can an eternal being, or one blessed with eternity of existence, think like this?

Therefore, the attachment to the body is what creates this idea of birth and death, and makes us afraid throughout life about that which will happen someday, as nothing more than 'I' escaping out of this shell into the liberty which I have to achieve. We want liberation on one side, that is why we are all here. On the other side, we are afraid of death. These are two contradictory ideas in ourselves. And since they are there in us, both together, it is not surprising that we are not progressing as fast as we should.

Spiritual aspirants who are growing all the time should have lost this idea of the fear of death long ago. Fear of what? Death doesn't exist. If I take off my shirt and put it in the wash basket it doesn't mean it is dead, nor does it mean that I am dead. Both are still there, the only thing is, they are not together. The shirt is somewhere, I am still somewhere. So, when I am dead, my body is somewhere, I am still somewhere. What is there to worry about? What is there to be afraid about?

The idea of the fear of death is a limiting factor. It still means that we are seeking liberation, being afraid of that same liberation. Fear of death is the fear of liberation. This is something we must all understand very positively. Fear of death is the fear of liberation. As long as we are afraid to die, we will not be liberated, but we will continue to be imprisoned within that cycle of birth and death of which we are so afraid. That means one who is afraid of death will have to die again and again and again until he loses his fear of it.

This is a psychological truth, that psychologists are always trying to expose us to that which we are afraid of, so that we may lose the fear of that particular thing. If you are afraid of dogs, they bring a dog near you, ask you to pet it, put it on your lap, and your fear goes. Here also, we do the same thing. As Babuji Maharaj said, "Every meditation is a training

in dying." Because when you go really deep into yourself, and you come out after it and say, "I was absorbed. I don't know where I was. I didn't even know whether I was sleeping or meditating," you have literally been not there. In a sense, you were dead to this existence.

Therefore, meditation is a training in dying. And if we have done it correctly, we should be masters of death, masters of the act of dying, one who can die when he wishes, one who can die when he chooses; coming back again and again if he wishes, so that his death is not really a death, but will be a resurrection like in the Christian tradition. Christ died, was put into the sepulchre, and he disappeared. We call it the resurrection.

If we continue to be afraid of death, it means we have not been meditating properly. Our practise has been wrong. So, we should think of this, and say, "What in heaven am I doing? Have I been meditating at all? If so, have I been meditating correctly? Why am I still afraid of death?" Is not meditation a training in dying, daily? Should not one who does something daily become a master of that? Should I not by now be a master of death? Therefore we say, "One who is a master of life is also a master of death." As Babuji Maharaj said, "He alone is the master of life and death as we understand it." Therefore it is a divine state when we achieve this purpose, when we become free of the fear of death and of the craving to be born. Both are negative.

"That which never was, shall never be," says the ancient Upanishad. And "That which is today, must have been, and will ever exist," because nothing new is coming into this universe. It is there as He created it. The soul is eternal. It is part of the divine essence, the ultimate, the infinite, the Godhead. It can no more cease to exist than God can cease to exist. God is not born, He does not die. Therefore, I am not born, I cannot die. All that I see and experience of birth and death are my problems imposed upon myself by my observing

people being born and people being dead. Therefore, I think I was born and I am going to die. The truth is that my body came into existence and will cease to be. I am eternal.

This is the teaching of spirituality. And I repeat, if we are meditating properly, there is an absolute mastery of death that waits for us. One who is the master of something cannot be afraid of that which he is master of. He is the master. Death becomes a subordinate, an instrument. So, we use death as something which we need to get out of a certain situation. Therefore, the soul can manifest itself again if it chooses, if it has work to do. Again using death to liberate itself from that momentary manifestation in an environment which it must clean and remodel. Thus masters come into existence at their will, born when they wish, leaving when they wish, neither the slaves of birth, nor the slaves of death, but masters of both.

Thank you.

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DEATH, PART I

Augerans, France
14 July, 1991

To continue with this idea of death. If it is understood in the spiritual context, it is the most remarkable, the most beautiful act of nature. Whereas we have, because of our identification with the body and its life, totally negated that original spiritual value of death, the idea of death, and converted it into something we're afraid of all of our lives. Those who have been deeply absorbed in meditation would have seen that there is nothing to be really afraid of. We are deeply merged in the inner Self. Sometimes when we wake up we don't know where we are, where we have been, how much time has elapsed. It is possible to be in that condition even after meditation, if you have the ability to hold on to that condition. Now when we come out of it, it is so blissful. We find that we have been in a state of bliss, in a state of utter peace. In fact in a state where really nothing exists, and we cannot say what has been, or what was, except to say that it was wonderful, and we are sorry it ended.

Now if that is the condition of death, or the state of death, or the state that we shall achieve when the body is dropped off, why should we be afraid of it? It is because we

are holding on to two things. One, the conventional idea and the fear of death, very human; and the other, the spiritual condition of eternity, the condition of the perception of immortality. And we never try to reconcile these two in our minds. I don't think we ever give a moment's thought to this. That if this is what is going to happen to me when I leave this body, if this is the state of being that I am going to have and to be in, what am I afraid of?

Now all that religion teaches us, you see, is that the hereafter, the state after death, is something to be afraid of in most cases. Some religions say we shall be judged, and we shall be dealt with according to the findings of that ultimate judge, and then sent to heaven or hell. And for that we require the bodies, so they are buried. And on the day of judgement, all the bodies will somehow miraculously come out their graves. I don't know why there should be a body for a judgement. I think a remnant, or a vestige, of this thought is the *habeas corpus*, in law. That the body must be physically present. And then, of course, knowing what we have been, knowing what we have been doing, what we have been thinking, the good old culpability, we are terrified of that hell which is portrayed so beautifully by the famous book *Inferno*, by Dante.

People have always been able to write wonderfully about horrible things, and horribly about wonderful things. I think this is one feature of writing in the conventional sense, that exaggeration takes us to absurd limits. So there is a portrayal of hell where we shall burn, where we shall have molten tar poured into our ears, molten lead poured into our noses, eyes put out again and again. We have the old Hebraic laws, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," which almost seems to make it impossible to ever get out of this mess, into this hell which we have sunk theologically and psychologically. Theological, we can do away with very easily. Once we leave the church we should have got rid of all

this nonsense. But psychologically we have become slaves. Slaves to our fears, slaves to our temptations.

You will remember Babuji Maharaj said, "Religions have always used two instruments: fear and temptation," and we have succumbed to them. So, either we are afraid of hell, or we are tempted by the idea of heaven. Therefore one half of your lives is spent in riotous living, falling into the hell of which you are afraid. The other half, we try to repent, give away to charity, build temples, build churches, give huge donations, and try to negate the earlier half, and in some way try to cheat God, and say, "No, no. Forget all that. See what I'm doing now." But this sort of thing doesn't work, because there is no God to sit in judgement upon us. I presume He has better things to do. I mean it would be a foolish God who would sit in some sort of heaven on a throne, and do nothing but judge millions of souls coming before Him, eternity after eternity. Surely, as the controller of the universe, the creator of the universe, He has more important things to do.

Spirituality says, "Don't be silly. He who judges is You. The real You, the Self within you, of Whom you are afraid. You are afraid of your Self." You are also afraid of your self, in the lower sense. Most of us don't know what we would do given a certain set of circumstances and opportunities. Therefore we are afraid. We are afraid of committing ourselves even to our own Self. We are afraid of friendships. We are afraid of situations. We are afraid of circumstances, of emotions, of love, of hate, of death, of life. In fact, we are afraid of everything. Which fear will come up under which circumstance or situation nobody can predict.

So you see, this life of ours which should have been blessed, full of fulfilment, joy, ecstasy, is full of fear, of greed, of misery. Everything reflecting that insensate fear of death. Those who are not able to enjoy, and don't want to sin, keep away from the track of enjoyment because they don't want to sin, not because they are virtuous.

Most of the human virtues that we see exhibited around us, by ourselves and by others, are negative in the sense that to avoid hell we walk on the straight path as far as possible. Not that we are that happy about going to heaven. Who wants to go to heaven? Because we have to die to get to heaven too. If today you are promised heaven, I don't know how many people would put up their hands here. We really don't want to die. Good, it's a wonderful thought. Because I think this is a reflection of the inner Self which says, "Stupid fellow, there is no death. How can you want to die? Or how can you want **not** to die?" Either is crazy when there is no such thing as death. So you see, we have to go by our experience, and not by the theories of religion.

Religions have always tried to frighten their adherents into some sort of stupid obedience, unthinking obedience. And there are some religions which are so expert at it that they will even kill you to prevent you from dying yourself. Cut off your hands and feet. Cut off your head. I don't know which God gave them any authority to kill. So you see, there are umpteen reasons for shying away from religions. And there is one excellent reason why we must go to spirituality. Because spirituality represents everything that religion is not. The only thing we can say they have in common is the idea of God.

Religion talks about God, makes Him a judge, makes Him capable of punishment. He can be angry. He can send you to hell, more often than not. And even the Christian God is supposed to be, well there is so much talk of compassion and love and mercy, which Jesus Christ preached. The God doesn't seem to have changed. Because He is the God of the priests, the money changers, the sellers of doves and calves, the makers of icons. I have often felt that if Jesus Christ were to walk on earth today, he would be the person most ashamed of this church which bears his name, the Christian Church. He would not only be ashamed, he would be shocked. And he would have to go into those temples of worship all over again, and overturn the money changers' tables, set free the doves,

break down the pulpits, and all over again start this life that he started two thousand years ago and in which palpably he has failed. It's there before us to see. It is not his failure, it is the failure of those who followed him, who perverted his teaching, who rewrote the Bibles, who hid the real texts, all to suit certain vested interests, vested powers; who re-moulded his thoughts, his ideas, his teachings, to suit their own, so that so-called churches could flourish. So, it is not religion which is flourishing today, it is the church. And they are two different things, you see.

So from spirituality, when it becomes hard and it becomes solidified and gross, you get religion. When that gets hard and gross, you get churches. Full of money, temples, churches, gold, gilt coverings. But that is all you have, what you used to call filthy lucre. Very aptly named. But it is there. This is the church as it exists, temples as they exist, any organization of worship as it exists. And they prey on our fear of death, and our fear of life, because we are also afraid of life. We are afraid of pain. We are afraid of suffering. We are afraid of sorrow. We are afraid of separation. We are afraid of childbirth. Having the baby, we are afraid it will die. When it grows up, we are afraid it will be abducted. When it returns safe from school, we are afraid it will put its head in the gas chamber. When she or he grows up, we are afraid that they will make the wrong liaisons, or get into the drug habit, or smoke, or get AIDS. When is this fear stopping? The mother is afraid when she has conceived a child, she is afraid of childbirth, she is afraid of the child, she is afraid about the child. Afraid of herself all along. So this fear has become a constant companion. And because it is a constant companion, we have to constantly go to churches, seeking their guidance, seeking their help. And they are waiting for a candle to be lit, for money on the plate, and a few prayers muttered in Latin which we don't understand.

The original language of the Bible is supposed to be Aramaic. Then it became Latinized. Then there is the Bible in

Greek. So many languages you see. And I wonder which language God really understands, [chuckles] whether He understands languages at all. Because spirituality says, "Silence is the language of God." Therefore spoken prayers, muttered prayers, shouted prayers, wailed prayers — W-A-I-L-E-D — all are a stupid, useless, waste of time. And as Babuji said so beautifully, "They are spoiling the atmosphere with their shouts."

So you see we have to go back to the idea of silence if our prayer is to reach Him. In silence alone can there become possible a union with the Ultimate, which you may call God or anything you like. In the utter silence of the inner Self alone God exists. We have to get into that utter silence ourselves if we are to be able to communicate with Him. If you want to catch a fish, you must get into the water. Or, at least, the bait must be thrown into the water. You cannot have the bait hanging out and the fish in the water, and say, "I'm catching a fish." We have to be in the medium, or in the dimension in which something exists, before we can communicate with that which exists in that dimension.

To love, we must be in a dimension of love. But we are only loving with our heads, evaluating the face, the figure, the texture of the skin, the beauty of the eyes, the redness of the lips. You can read Byron, a famous poet, you will have a lot of these descriptions. And then for that we fall? So it is with the eyes and with the head. Where is this love? So we must be in that dimension. When you are in that dimension, that which is in that dimension like you is attracted. So it is not person attracting person, it is dimension attracting dimension. This is a thought which you would do well to ponder upon. Therefore people ran after Babuji. What was it they saw in Him? They cannot explain. That is precisely the wonder of the beauty, and the beauty of the wonder, that that which is wonderful cannot be explained why it is wonderful. That which is beautiful cannot be explained why it is beautiful. It is. So of God it is said, "He is." Nothing to qualify. He is strong. He is powerful.

He is beautiful. The moment you are able to say this, it is no longer God.

But religion speaks of God as merciful, as compassionate, as kind, as the giver, as the lawmaker, as the lawgiver, umpteen descriptions of God. So anything that can be described cannot be God. Anything which can be said to be here cannot be God. Anything which is said to be there also cannot be God. God cannot be bound by space and time. Because space and time are dimensions of a temporal existence. There must be that from which space and time also come.

You know, it is like a grown up child which says, "Mummy, mummy, where did I come from?" Somebody says, "Oh, you came from your mother's stomach." "But how? I'm so big, how can I have been in your stomach?" "Well, when you were there you were a dimensionless point." Mathematically a point has no dimension. An egg cell, when it is fertilized, is virtually a dimensionless point. Yet it is growing and growing and growing, and it produces us: 1.97 metres, 1.87 metres, 1.77 metres, 1.67 metres, giants, normal men, pygmies. Yet we began as a point. A point has potential. Potential means it has absolute potential to become anything that it wants. But, when the potential is actualized, it is only that which it has become, nothing more.

So, religion speaks of destruction of potential. It says, "You are a human being, you are in the image of God. But you shall go to hell." It is a reverse process you see. "And there you shall suffer." How, if I am made in the image of God? How, if the macrocosm and the microcosm are the same? How can there be sin? How can there be corruption? How can there be perversion? How can there be hell? And, how can that which is everything, sublime, beautiful, have to go to hell to suffer? So it's a crazy idea, this whole thing.

I remember reading a science fiction story which goes in reverse time. And it was really crazy. The bugle is being

blown by, I think, the angel Gabriel. The day of judgement has come. And there is this horrifying spectacle of bodies getting up out of graves, becoming smaller and smaller, going back into the wombs of their mothers, the mother dying, rising up from her grave, into her previous existence, and this goes on timelessly. Because there has been no time. You cannot point out to an original Adam and Eve and say they were the first father and mother. It shows beautifully the absolute absurdity of this idea, projected in reverse. People should think in reverse sometimes. Like, you have to reverse your car when you have to get out of a cul-de-sac or something like that. You should learn to think in reverse. What will I do when I come out of hell? If there is a hell, and if God sends me there, will I ever be able to come out of it? If I come out, what will I become?

I don't know if I told you about an argument I had once with a priest on a plane, travelling between Madras and Madurai. By accident, or by coincidence, I had the window seat, he had the seat on my right. I was reading Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra*. He kept looking over my shoulder. And it was irritating, but he had his white dress on, the habit as we say — Catholic Church. And I was not able to tell him to keep quiet, because I was trained in Christian schools. There is a natural reverence also for people in the habit. I kept quiet. Eventually he patted me on the shoulder and said, "Young man, you appear to be educated and intelligent. You are travelling by plane. But I see you are reading this rubbish." I said, "What rubbish?" He said, "This thing, do you believe in all this?" I said, "Well, you know, each one's belief is personal." He said, "No, no. Hinduism is full of utter stupidities. They believe in rebirth." I said, "Don't you believe in it?" He said, "No, no, my son. In the Christian Church we have no tradition of rebirth."

I said, "Father can I ask you a question?" He said, "Yes." I said, "What happens when a man dies?" He said, "He awaits the day of judgement." "So, who judges, Father?" He

said, "God in heaven judges, and," he said, "The judgement can be for us or against us." I said, "In what sense?" He said, "If we are sinners we can go to hell. And if we are virtuous, in his infinite mercy he will send us to heaven." I said, "Why infinite mercy to send me to heaven? He must have mercy when I have to go to hell. If I have done good and have earned Heaven, I don't need his mercy any more." He said, "No, no, my son. We cannot question God's will." Then I said, "Well, what happens afterwards?" He said, "What do you mean — what happens afterwards?" I said, "Well, one fellow goes to heaven, one fellow goes to hell, something must happen afterwards." He said, "No, no, I don't understand you." I said, "Father, if I go on a holiday, I come back somewhere. If I am sent to prison, I am released. I have to come out and come back to society. What happens to the souls which are judged after they go to heaven and hell? They cannot be eternally in hell or eternally in heaven." He got angry. He said, "Oh, you are being argumentative." And he went into the toilet.

By then, mercifully, the plane landed and he went away. But he was not able to answer this question. You see, this is the thing: what happens afterwards? So you see, everything must have an answer. Now there is no answer to this. One is sent to heaven, one is sent to hell. Hallelujah. Then what?

Spirituality says, "Nonsense. There is no heaven, there is no hell. We are born because we have certain samskaras which make it necessary for us to come and exist again, and learn the lessons that we have to learn again. The mistakes we have made in the past on our way, our evolutionary path, we have to correct. So, in this life there comes a point when we cannot learn any more, when we are saturated as it were. So the soul in its infinite wisdom says, "Enough. Now I have to change." It vacates this body, and if it has to come back again to learn its lessons again, it chooses its next environment, its next body, everything that is necessary.

So, it is our choice. We choose how long we shall live, where we shall live, to whom we shall be born, in Africa or in Europe, beggar or king. The soul chooses everything. But what happens? After we are born, again this blessed world takes hold of us. Again the desires start flourishing, temptations start rising, and the course that has been charted out is missed, and we are now going on the wrong tack. So the lesson of the life is not learned. Our living becomes futile. In that sense, our dying was futile, because we died only to live again. We died so that we could build for ourselves a fresh opportunity to evolve. And that opportunity we are destroying ourselves, by our stupid behaviour, stupid thoughts, stupid actions. It's like a sailor who deliberately throws his compass overboard, and allows himself to be buffeted by the winds of the oceans. He has no direction. He has no rudder. He has no sails. One day he will hit an iceberg and die, or sink somewhere and die, or just starve to death.

Now there is one very interesting thought I had a few days back. We all are born with the same opportunity. When Babuji says, "In this life it is possible," it means that opportunity exists for everybody, irrespective of our birth, irrespective of anything. Therefore, as I said, this is really wonderful socialism at its best, at its spiritual best — that all are equal in the eyes of opportunity. Forget God. When we are born, we have the same opportunity, but as we grow up we lose opportunity after opportunity after opportunity. Even by the time we enter our teens most opportunities have been lost. When we have passed our teens, perhaps there is no more any opportunity at all, except to go deeper and deeper into that quicksand in which we have sunk. No choice, no chance. The will is useless because the more you struggle, the more you go in. The quicksand, I don't know what you call the quicksand in French? *Sables mouvants*. Yes. See, once you get in, you are lost.

Now in that sense, for such people, life is a *sables mouvants*. That's why they are going deeper and deeper. They

have good intentions. They try to change. They try to correct. But they are sinking in the wrong direction. They now need somebody to throw a rope and pull them out. And that is the guru you see, the Master. If you say, "Why do I need a Master? I don't need one," well, continue to sink! Who bothers? Nobody is bothered. You have the absolute right to continue to sink, knowing that if you die there, you are going to be given another opportunity by your Self. If you accept help, you may not have to go through this problem of being born again, of losing the way, of not finding a master. Why is it important that we should do it in this life? Because if, unfortunately, we don't achieve our goal in this life and have to be reborn, we may not find a master again. We cannot find our way in a small village. We are lost in cities.

You know, once when I was living in Split, in Yugoslavia, I went out for a swim with the other fellows, very bravely, in the Adriatic. We were hardly one hundred and fifty metres or so away from the coast. When you look around and there is nothing to see, there is a moment of fear. Now, which way is land? Because I'm not used to that sea, I'm not used to that ocean. At that moment of fear there is no logic. You cannot say the waves will wash me in the direction of the land. We don't think. When there is fear, we don't think. I would have drowned that day, because for a moment that power, that fear was so overpowering. [gasps] I couldn't breathe. But you know I had my arrogance, being a Leo, and I said, "These Yugoslav blighters, they should not think that they are better than me. Or that I am worse than them, which is the same thing." So I put on a brave face and started swimming, and then I was all right. That moment of fear has to be overcome. I faced it in the Adriatic, off Split. It was a nice experience.

So, like that here too fear comes, you see. But this fear must not be allowed to overpower us. Take a few deep breaths and it's finished. Anyway, not to wander from the point, you see, we give ourselves the time and place of our death more or less. When we are born, we are born with the fullest

opportunity which is not denied to anybody. In this sense, death is really the great leveller. I am surprised that people have had such profound thoughts. In life we are born into a life of unequal opportunities, materially. Even in the same school some children are brilliant, some children are dropouts. Even in the same company, some rise to the top, some sink to the bottom. Even in the same ocean, some continue to sail, some sink. But at birth, this is the divine law, every child has the same opportunity. And it is this thought which must prevail where we have schools for all. No white schools and black schools as in Johannesburg until recently. No separate education, because given equal opportunity and given equal effort, achievement must be equal. And this is possible only in the spiritual field.

So, you see, in that sense death erases all the lost opportunities of the past. Missed opportunities, wasted opportunities, wrongly used opportunities, and puts us back once again on the field and says, "Start all over again. You are again at the beginning of the race. It can be won."

So you see what a wonderful thing death really is, if we die rightly. As those who have achieved a spiritual goal in this life, we don't really die, we just sink into the deepest meditation and close our eyes. To others we are dead, but we have escaped into another dimension where we don't even know we had a body. Which is what happens in a samadhi condition. You fall forward, hit your head on the ground and still you don't know it. But not being used to that posture, your muscles start paining and then that wakes you up and you come up and sit erect again. And then you start falling all over again.

So you see, this end of life, it is stupid to call it death. For one who has achieved spiritual heights it's just a going to sleep. He closes his eyes and he is gone. Others weep, others bewail his loss. Others may cremate his body or bury his body, but he has ceased to be here. He is into another dimension. If

you don't achieve that termination to this life, then we have this wonderful, superb, divine mercy, you see, that you start all over again, but at the same point as everybody else. No difference. There is no debit balance here. You are not judged by the past. You are only given an absolutely brand new opportunity with infinite possibilities not denied to anybody.

If we can think of death in the right way, we should say to ourselves, "We have wasted our life, let us not waste our death." This should be our last thought you see. Because what I could not achieve in life, I can surely achieve in death again, if I know what I'm doing. Therefore at the moment of death, it is necessary to be at least able to be conscious of our purpose and to die. Like when you sleep, if you make a determination that you shall wake up at five o'clock in the morning, you do wake up at five o'clock. Why? Because there is this mind over matter business. Something wakes me up. It cannot fail. Why does it fail? Because I don't have faith in myself. I am used to having faith in clocks, and things like that. We have transferred our faith to the mechanical world. We need clocks to awaken us, we need timers in our kitchen. Everything we have now, transferred from inside ourselves to outside ourselves. Comfort and peace of mind are not inside, they are outside. They are in our cushions, on our carpets, on our lovely beds, air conditioners. Whereas it should be here. If you look meticulously into this thought that, "Everything that should be inside me is now outside me, therefore I am a mere shell," then you will understand what we have become.

Now what is the process to reverse this whole business, to bring back the dependence upon yourself? Cultivate habits afresh. Throw away your alarm clocks. Wake up on time. Learn to be in tune with nature. Depend on the cock which crows. You may say, "Well, to what absurd limits can you carry this?" There are no absurd limits. Because to develop the inner strength, the inner capacity, the inner totality of existence is absolutely possible; whereas outside, you can only transfer so much, and no more. One night you fail to set the

alarm, you wake up late the next morning. Or when it rings you just put out a blind hand and knock it on the head and cover yourself — you're asleep for another six hours. The inner dependence can never fail.

Courage means to have that which is necessary in your heart. Encourage means to put into the heart of someone that which must be there. '*Encourage.*' '*En coeur.*' So, where is courage? It is not in muscles, you see. It is in the heart. Therefore you find great people have not been strong people. They had the moral strength with which they could defy the universe, leave alone worlds or people or teachers or devils. They could defy the universe, and get away with it. So we must know where these strengths are to be, from where we have removed them and put them outside. Why the strongest nation has people who are always running after guns? Because personal strength doesn't exist any more. Personal courage doesn't exist any more. So we buy one gun, a second gun, a third gun, a fourth gun, and have an arsenal inside the house. And one day, your mother walks in, and in the dark you don't know who she is and you shoot her down. And then weep in court, you see.

So, external strength is inner weakness. Inner strength may look like external weakness, but it is not. Because this is the real strength. Like when you say, "At its core it is strong." So, we have to put back everything into the heart. Now, what is everything? It cannot be piecemeal. That I put back strength. I put back wealth. I put back insurance. I put back... Not like that. What is everything and yet nothing? It is divinity. I can put Him in as nothing, and it becomes everything. If I seek to put Him in as everything, time until the end of eternity will not suffice. It's like putting in grains of sand into a thimble, counting them. It's not possible. If you have to fill a box, it will take you years. Therefore, you see, we have to have this idea of nothingness, God as nothingness from which everything comes. Therefore no form, no name, no attributes, no qualities, nothing. That nothingness we have

to absorb into ourselves, put Him there inside the heart. From that nothingness now comes everything.

Therefore, by putting nothing in my heart, I have everything in my heart. But when I seek to put everything in my heart, I have nothing. Then we will be like bewildered children in toy shops, not knowing what to take. Or like one of my friends who was driving me, one day, from my office in Madras to my home, and we passed a ladies' college. The college had just closed, and there were a few hundred girls outside. And his hand started to shake, and I said, "What's going on? You are wobbling." He said, "No, no. I was just thinking. Suppose somebody stopped my car now and said, 'You can take the pick of these girls.' You know I will go mad." I said, "Why?" He said, "They are all so beautiful, which one to choose?" This is the problem of the child in the toy shop, of a man in a restaurant, of a drunkard in a bar. "Which to take? All are nice gleaming bottles. All expensive. Which?" And if you try them one after the other, you know what happens — mixed drinks!

So, this is what happens to us in life. Children with mixed toys, lovers with mixed loves, drunkards with mixed drinks. All ending up in a mess in the gutter. No mixing please! Adulteration means mixing. Not impurity. To adulterate something with another is impure. Water and milk. Water by itself is pure. Milk by itself is wonderful. I can live without milk but not without water. Yet I am not allowed to water the milk, because it is adulterated milk. When I mix my loves it is adultery. So, you see, no mixing, because the One, the Perfect cannot be mixed with anything else. I cannot have two gods. Now that is a mixture. It is adultery all over again. Three is hopeless. Four is mixed drinks, gutter! One God! Which in our mission we put beautifully: "**One Master, One Mission, One Method**." The three are essentially the same.

So for those of us who are strong spiritually, there is no death. We shall go into a blissful samadhi from which we shall

not come out. That will be the final samadhi. That is why when saints pass on it is called the *mahasamadhi*, the ultimate samadhi, the final samadhi from which there is no return. They don't come back into this conscious existence. When we enter into samadhi, we come back again and again, because we have yet to work off our samskaras, and have to achieve that balanced condition from which alone one can go away finally.

For those of us — I hope there will be none — who are not strong enough to tread this path, let us hope they will pass on knowing that death is a new opportunity, where everything is clean. You start off with a new slate. You open a new page, and you have infinite possibilities from that state. Nature does not deny opportunities. This is not an accounts book where the debits of the past year are carried over to the first page of the new accounts book. And debts mount and mount and mount until we go to the debtor's prison. It's not like that. In God's accountancy there is no debit at all. There is only opportunity, opportunity, and more opportunity. And I pray that you should all make use of these opportunities, and evolve out of this existence, into the higher existence, and to the Highest, by His grace.

Thank you.

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DEATH, PART II

Augerans, France
16 July, 1991

I have tried to place before you some thoughts on the spiritual life, and tried to compare it with religion: religion and spirituality. I don't know how well I have managed it, but, today I think I should try to conclude the whole thing by referring again to death. "Death, the great leveller," they say. We often refer to the fact that, king or pauper, man or woman, saint or sinner, the end of the human life is the same for all. In that sense we say death is the great leveller. But for me, it seems to point to the fact that the levelling is after death. Some people have asked me questions, "How is this possible that we can begin life with equal opportunity? Does it not go against this business of samskara in Sahaj Marg?" It is a valid question, but it also shows that we don't understand Sahaj Marg very well yet, for several reasons.

The first reason is Babuji's definition of death itself: that when we become unable to bear the loads and the burdens of this life, nature brings a pause in the existence, in the worldly existence, temporal existence, and gives us relief, so that the self can recoup its energies once again, review its life, work off as much samskara as possible, and start afresh.

Now, why do we start afresh? Precisely because in that interregnum between this end and that beginning, it has not been possible to work off all the samskaras. There is some remnant, some residue. So, we come again.

So, death is really a holiday from life. And Babuji has used this beautiful analogy, that even the prisoners in the dungeons are let out for one or two hours every day to go up in the sunshine in the courtyards, to have fresh air, to have some exercise, so that they can face the next period of incarceration in the dungeon.

Therefore, death is not a punishment. Neither is death an end. Some Occidental writers on the subject treat death with contempt, with fear. And many people have been educated into thinking that death is to be avoided, even by committing suicide, which is ridiculous. You cannot avoid death by dying. You can only avoid death by living properly. Because again and again I have these references in the books that I read, of all classes, whether it be science fiction, whether it be philosophy, poetry, this misery about death. "Why am I born if I am only to die?" I ask you, "What else should I be born for?" It is like saying, "Why do I get onto this TGV if I only have to get out of it again?" It would be as silly, you see. A journey does not mean that you go on and on forever. Life goes on, but not journeys.

Again and again we come back to this idea that when we think of life in the body only as the true life, and that after the body drops off we have no existence, we are going into some sort of limbo, some sort of, I don't know, dirty thing, we make the mistake ourselves. Whatever may be the residual samskara that we bring to this life, it is absolutely a fact that at the beginning we all have the same opportunity that any one of us has. Now, this opportunity can be utilized in several ways. It doesn't mean immediately that suppose, for example, we have a deaf-mute who is also blind. Or, we have a cretinous child. You can turn around and ask, "But you yourself said we

cannot help mental patients, because they cannot use their mind to meditate." Nevertheless, the opportunity exists. But how? This you have to think about. How does this opportunity exist? How is it to be utilized? Because life on earth cannot be a life of futility, a life of misery, a life of unending despair. It cannot be. People who think it is are denying God, denying His justice, His mercy, His benevolence, and denying His love more than anything else.

Today we find people questioning God's mercy, questioning God's love. "If God exists, why is this child like this?" On the contrary, we should ask, "God being what He is, Love itself, why is this child like this?" It must be an enquiry, not a doubt. Our faith must come into play. "Why, if God is love, He is merciful, He is compassionate, yet this child is born like this?" Then we come to the answer of Sahaj Marg: that it is because of the samskaras of the past. Does it mean eternal condemnation to this state in life, this station in life, this situation in life, these miseries? Certainly not. So, what is the escape route? What is the explanation? That God, being where He is, we being where we are, yet there is so much misery? He is love; I am miserable. He is merciful; I feel that I am a sinner, that I have no redemption. He is compassionate; I feel bereaved, lost, unpardoned. How can he be compassionate and I continue to feel guilty? Because we don't feel. We have lost feeling. We have lost touch. So, the fault lies in us, not in Him.

I repeat, there is no doubt that opportunity at the beginning is the same. I find this thought reflected, for instance, in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. You may or may not believe in it, but it is an old system, and a superb system, where again this thought is reflected, that at the moment of death, everything is possible. Babuji has said this again. Those of you who have read *My Master* will recall that Babuji has said, "At the moment of death, it is possible to take the soul from here and put it there, to liberate it." The trouble begins thereafter. So, the need to die in the right way.

Now, when we are afraid of death, and we say, "I don't want to die at all," how can we accept this idea that we have to die correctly? Die rightly? Constant remembrance is very much a feature of this dying rightly, because if you are ever in His memory, remembering Him all the time, and our end comes in this life with the thought of the Master in our mind, He comes, takes us away. That is liberation. That is, the moment of death becomes the moment of liberation. If you don't have that thought, if you have desires, if you have fears, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* puts it very dramatically, tracing the course of the soul from the moment of death, through day one, day two, day three, day four, day five. They say, "Now the soul is on its path. Liberation is getting not so easy. The soul sees demons or temptations in the hereafter. Don't believe it." Because this lama is giving advice to the departed soul through his own psychic powers. He says, "Don't be distracted by either. If you see demons, they are projections of the fears in your mind. If you see *apsaras*, divine *houris*, beautiful damsels waiting for you with outstretched arms, beware of them, too, because that is also a creation of your desires. Neither exists. Go on. Liberation is yet possible."

At the end of day one, day two begins. They say, "Now you will find yourself in darkness, but remember that in eternity there is no darkness. This darkness is a projection of the darkness in your mind. Gather up your courage, negate this darkness. Throw it out of your mind, and you will see brilliant light. Walk towards it. Liberation is yet possible." It goes on giving guidance like this, until finally on the forty-first day it says, "Now your journey through this medium is finished. The next womb is waiting for you. At least enter this womb with faith, with courage, knowing that liberation is yet possible, though you have to exist once again in this mortal world." The soul is reborn.

At every moment of this transition between this death and that life, liberation continues to be possible. Liberation was possible absolutely at the moment of death. Possibilities,

according to the Tibetan tradition, continue through death. It continues into the next life. What is holding us back? According to them, our fears and temptations. According to Sahaj Marg, our samskaras. What is the difference? There is no difference. All traditions which are not religious per se, speak of the same possibility. Religion talks of death, burial, judgement, possible redemption. The non-religious, I won't say they are irreligious, but those philosophies which transcend religion always speak of the possibility of escape. Not an escape in the idea of escape like a sinner running away from something, or a prisoner breaking out of jail, but escaping from our own self, the lower self. This possibility is absolute, it is eternal. It has never stopped at any moment in time. It has never been withheld from anybody. This is the absolute justice, mercy, compassion, love of the Almighty. In this we have to have faith.

This being so, how can our opportunities differ at birth? They did not differ at death. Because anybody dying with this thought of the Ultimate, with the thought of his goal in mind, reaches that goal. Anybody! To ensure that we have the right thought at the moment of oblivion, is all this problem that we are facing — meditation, constant remembrance, developing love for the Master. So that, if we have established it as a continuing truth in our existence, it cannot depart from us at the moment of death. We shall die with this thought, with this condition. Therefore, there is no more question of being reborn, and of not being liberated. Hinduism says, even if you are not able to do this, if at the end of your life, at that moment you are able to think of God in His absolute form, which is a formless, attributeless, nameless existence, then too, this is possible.

Therefore, in India you have this funny idea of naming your children after gods and goddesses. Because if, at the last moment, you say, "Rama, come here," nevertheless you are thinking about Rama. I have written about this in *My Master*, I think, where at the moment of death, if the priest is available,

and he is able to enter your consciousness, even though you may be in a coma, and revive this thought of your goal, of the Master, of God in you, still it is possible.

So you see, it is not right to separate life from death and say, "In life we had opportunities; in death there is no opportunity. In life everything was possible; death is a negation of all possibility. In life we have happiness and joy, in death we have only darkness and misery." This is absolutely silly. Master has been very emphatic on this point. Otherwise, he would not say, "In Sahaj Marg we accept anybody." You are not evaluated when you come to this practice. Nobody asked you about your past. We only talk of your future. Again and again Babuji Maharaj has said, "In this life, in this existence, if you don't achieve the goal, forget it." Why 'forget it'? Not that it is a denial of the opportunity. Because, the mistake we have committed once again, if you continue to commit with a Master of the highest calibre, who guarantees liberation at the minimum, if you miss that opportunity, too, what is going to be a better opportunity for you? If this opportunity is not used, what other opportunity are you going to use? If you do not use it now when it is available, when are you going to use it in the future? In that sense he says, "Make sure that in this life, here and now, it is achieved." Then you are sure of it. But it does not mean opportunity decreases. It does not mean opportunities are lost. We may have missed so many opportunities, yet life itself is continuing opportunity. If you like, you can define life as continuing opportunity. We miss one after the other, but yet there are more opportunities ahead.

Any single opportunity can be the last one for us, in two senses. Either we use it rightly and **off** we go, or we miss it and **on** we go. There is absolutely no question of annihilation of the soul, annihilation of the consciousness. It is absurd. It is stupid. It is a crime against humanity to talk like that. Annihilation of what? So you see, we have to re-evaluate. You don't even require faith. We need effort. Faith in what? Faith

in myself, that I can do this. What is necessary? That which you are being taught.

Now, to come back to this question of people who cannot meditate. Some are able to meditate. It doesn't mean that everybody who meditates is going to get to the goal, because it depends on what we put into it, how well we meditate, with what seriousness of purpose. Is it just a hobby? Is it just a pastime? Or is it a lifetime endeavour? Has it become my life? Am I meditating even when I am doing other things? Constant remembrance, in one sense, means that, too. This is self-effort. But we know that by self-effort we are not going to succeed. Not that it is impossible, because Babuji says, "It is possible." Then why is it not possible to the majority of human beings, or perhaps to all humanity minus one or two? First, because we don't believe in the possibility. Second, even if we believe in it, we don't attempt it. Third, we are distracted on the way, hither and thither, and we lose the way. Three very simple reasons. None of these is interposed between me and my goal by either a God or by destiny. I do it.

Now, what about those who cannot meditate, who have no mind to use? Are they doomed for eternity? You see, samskara has to be worked off in one way or the other. Either we have the *bhog* where we undergo the effects of the samskaras, which may be reflected as pleasure and pain, enjoyment and non-enjoyment — all the two opposites. We cannot insist that the bhog should be in this way or in that way. Some have to undergo the past samskaras by being rich and suffering. Some have to undergo it by being poor and suffering. Rich people suffer as much as poor people, if not more. Some have to undergo samskara by being married many times, some by not being married at all. Some with many children, some with no children. In everything it is samskara.

As I said, "Death, the great leveller." You may live on the throne all your life, sleep on satin and silk, live in palaces; the end is the same. And he knows his problems, the king.

Any king who is worth his salt and who is sensible will say, "For heaven's sake, remove this crown from my head and let me go." You know, one of the famous monarchs of British history, for the love of a woman gave up his throne, abdicated. Some people think he was a stupid fellow, "For a mere woman, you see, to give up a throne!" But that is the people who lust after thrones. So, why a man gives up, what he gives up, is decided not by him but by his samskara. Whom he loves is decided by samskara; in the purely material world I'm talking of now. Not love of God, not the pure abstract love, but love between man and woman, your children, your parents. All this is decided by samskara.

Why do you marry a particular person? It is again a samskara. Why, if you marry a second time, you again go and fall into the same ditch? Marrying a similar person who will kick you around, rob you of your money. Experience should have taught us better. But there is experience on one side, there is the pull of samskara on the other side.

So, knowing that we are making mistakes, we are continuing to make the same mistake again and again. There is no choice. You can see any much-married person. They think there is a change, but there is no change. The face may be different, the height may be different, the form may be different, the colour may be different. But that which attracts you is the same. Like a magnet will always attract iron in whatever form that iron is. It is in us, you see — this tendency to pull towards us this or this or this. And this or this or this is only apparent. In reality it is always the same. It is always iron.

So, you see the pull of the samskara? Now, how much of this can I work off by my own self-efforts? Understanding that it may not be possible within one lifetime. That nevertheless the promise of nature, that we are all equal at birth as we were equal at death, must be fulfilled. There comes a Master.

He complements, or supplements, whichever way you want to look at it, our abilities, our efforts towards reaching the goal. What I cannot do, He will do for me, provided I at least make the attempt. So, that is the second way.

One, is by self-effort. It is possible, if I am devoted to my liberation, dedicated to the effort — single-pointed integrity. But Babuji has said we must remember that with all the effort at our disposal, with all the dedication, with all the dedication to our goal, yet it takes forty-five years to move from point one to point two. So, at least in today's life it is not possible, where human beings are not even sure of sixty years, seventy years, eighty years. Therefore, to have recourse to opportunity number two, look for a guru; tie him to yourself in such a way that you cannot break away from him. This becomes the second opportunity, the second possibility, the second way.

Now, to look for a guru does not mean that I am impotent or imbecile. It only means asking for help in a situation in which I cannot do something myself. When I cannot repair my refrigerator, I call a refrigerator technician. When I cannot repair my telephone, I call a mechanic. When I cannot repair my car, I send it to the garage. If there is no loss of face and prestige in those things, why is there, or why do you think there is, a loss of prestige and face in looking for a guru? He is as much a mechanic or a chemist or whatever it is. Or perhaps everything put together. Why should we be shy of taking his help? Why should we feel proud and say, "No, no. I don't need a Master." In Occidental countries this is a very common disease. "No, no. I don't need a Master. What is a Master for? Why a Master?" Well then, you have to do it yourself. Nature does not condemn us. We condemn ourselves. That is way number two.

Way number three also exists, but that is beyond us. It is not really our way. What is that way? Perhaps you would like to think over it. It is very easy. It is the doctrine of grace. Now

grace is at His disposal. He showers it when He will, where He will, upon whom He will. There is no question of deservingness; there is no question of effort; there is no question of anything. Prayer is the way of attracting that grace. Not attracting in the sense of throwing a lasso and roping the horse and pulling it in. But prayerfully, penitentially, with an empty heart, just sitting and waiting.

As Babuji Maharaj has said, "True prayer means not asking, not demanding, but just in the subtlest possible way placing the problem and just waiting." If He decides, He will solve it. If He doesn't, we continue to pray. Now many people pray once and say, "Oh, I'm praying but nothing happens." Yes, but if you pray once and nothing happens, you should pray again. You telephone and the man you want to speak to is not there, you telephone again. You telephone again a third time. You telephone again a fourth time, until you have got the person. If it is important you do it again and again, isn't it? So, why not pray again and again? We cannot set a limit to our prayers, either to the prayer that we offer, or to the number of times we shall pray, or to the time that we shall pray for. In effect, prayer must become a constant way of life.

We meditate and make meditation a state of life, so that we are eternally in a contemplative mood, even when we are involving ourselves in other activities, which will mean minimum involvement in activities, maximum involvement in contemplation. Which will mean also automatically leading a right life, because we have no time and inclination to do what is not necessary, or what is wrong. So, we get into this contemplative mood, keep in constant remembrance, the Master ever with us. Then there is nothing to worry about. Samskaras just disappear like mist when the sun rises. They don't exist any more. It is not that they are blown away or scattered away. The sun rises and the mist is gone. Like the sun rises and the darkness is gone. Is the darkness removed bit by bit? There is no such thing. Is fear removed bit by bit? Psychologists make this mistake — that I am afraid of a dog,

you are afraid of a cat, she is afraid of a snake. But there is only one fear. To my mind, it is the fear of death.

Any fear in any situation is essentially the fear of death. If that is removed there should be no other fear. A person who has no fear of death cannot be afraid of anything else. What else is there to be afraid of? We are afraid a dog will bite us because we may get rabies, we will suffer, we may become crazy, we will die. We are afraid of falling from a height, agoraphobia, because we are afraid to die. We are afraid of the water because we are afraid of dying. We are afraid of closed places because we are afraid that we will stifle and die. All these phobias — claustrophobia, agoraphobia, photophobia, this phobia, that phobia — eventually, it is the fear of death. If fear of death is removed there can be no other fear. Fearlessness can come at one stroke by removing one single fear which is the breeding ground of all other fears. But we are trying to remove them one by one. "No, no, my fear of snakes has gone, but now I am afraid of dogs." Another session of therapy, another thousand dollars. "Now I'm not afraid of dogs, but I am afraid of beetles." You see, it is an endless thing.

We have always to come to the root of the problem. One single root cut, the tree falls. But if you are taking off leaf by leaf by leaf, then cutting the twigs, then cutting the branches, even before you have finished one branch, the next branch has come into existence. This is how we are leading life, by piecemeal efforts. Leaf by leaf by leaf. "What are you doing?" "No, no, I'm trying to cut down this tree." "How?" "I am removing from the top, you know, leaf by leaf by leaf." Will you ever succeed? Never, it is obvious. But cut the root and the tree is automatically dead, because you have removed the source of its sustenance. Remove samskaras, the root of our existence here in this mortal world is finished.

If this is not possible, then it is the question of grace, the question of prayer. Therefore, when people come to us and

say, "You know, this boy, he is not being cured. He is twenty-eight but he behaves as if he is eight years old. Can he meditate?" No. Obviously not. When he cannot brush his teeth, go to the toilet by himself, how is he going to meditate? But then the people get upset, annoyed, angry against God. There is a way, you see, but that way we don't understand, we don't accept. We think God must act directly. "Why should I pray?" This is another arrogance. "Why should I pray? If He is kind, should He not come and do it Himself?" It is like saying, "Why should I call my carpenter? If he's a good carpenter, should he not come?" How does he know you need him?

So, prayer is putting before the Almighty your need in the subtlest form, not asking for anything. Leave it to Him to fulfil the need in His own way, in His own time, when He considers it appropriate.

So you see, from this idea that opportunity is equal, death gives us equal opportunity. As we continue to live, the equality of opportunity is unfortunately being disintegrated by us, by our actions, by our foolishness. You will find this reflected in any sensible, mystical philosophy. Religions deny it. Spirituality affirms it. If we want an affirmative life, we must go towards spirituality. If you want a life of denial in the other sense, that I have somebody who is denying me everything, including redemption, including penitential rites, including anything, there is no possibility. But, you will find in religions there is one vestigial remainder of this truth, that we are born with some samskaras, otherwise we would not be born.

There is this old ritual which still exists in churches, in Hinduism, in any other religion, where we try to clean the child at its birth, or perhaps a few days later, of those vestiges. Like baptism, like purificatory rites. But they have lost their significance. If they were working today, the child should have an absolutely marvellous saintly life. At its best, it should

pop off immediately. Its work is over. Baptism should mean that child is ready to be buried.

You will remember a famous story about the benefit of satsangh I told you, perhaps in Courmettes. Narada, the great rishi is supposed to be able to travel in all dimensions, master of the seven worlds, like God Himself. He did not know what is the value of satsangh. So, one day when Lord Narayana was going for his walk, Narada came and said, "Lord, what is the benefit of this satsangh? Everybody is talking about it; I don't understand it." The Lord said, "Go to the world known as Bhuloka, our world. There you will find a spider hanging from its web. Ask him this question." So, Narada goes there, finds the spider, and says, "Oh spider, can you tell me the value of satsangh?" The spider just explodes and dies.

Narada is perturbed. He thinks he has contributed to its death. He comes back to Narayana a little doleful, a bit miserable. He says, "Lord, this is what happened. I went and asked this question, and that spider just died." Narayana smiles, and he says, "Oh, is that what happened? And you don't understand the significance? Now go back to earth. A cow is giving birth to a calf. Ask that calf this question." So Narada goes back, the calf is just being born. He waits. The calf is born, and he asks, "Oh calf, can you tell me what is the value of satsangh?" The calf just looks at him and dies.

Now he is really miserable. He says, "What is going on?" He is almost ashamed to go back to Narayana, but he has no other way. So, he goes back to Narayana and says, "Lord, what are these tricks you are playing on me? The calf, too, died." He says, "Oh, how did that happen? Okay, doesn't matter. Now you go back to another particular place on earth, where a woman is being delivered of her child. Ask that child this question." Narada goes with no hope in his heart, miserable, afraid of the consequences of his visit. Suppose the child should die? But the Lord has said, and he must obey. The child has just been born. He very prayerfully says, "Child,

can you tell me this? What is happening? I want to know the benefit of satsangh." And then the child smiled and said, "Narada, have you not known it? I was the spider. And you, the greatest of sages, came before me. By satsangh with you (satsangh means 'to be with' also, 'to be with the truth,' 'to be with the light') by being with you just for a moment, I was liberated from that existence. Because of that I was reborn as a calf. Again you came to my help. By that momentary satsangh with you, I was removed out of that existence. Now I am born as a human, which is the highest birth. Thank you, Narada for coming a third time. You are now liberating me finally." And with prayer, it just folds its hands and says "*Om namo narayana*," or some such thing, and the child dies. Then he understands that he has liberated the thing.

Satsangh with a great person liberates you. So, in that sense, satsangh means to be always with. *Sat — sangh*. Sat means the truth, the eternal verity. *Sanga* means to be with. So, in our meditation we are eternally with Him, or we should be if we are meditating in the right way. I am meditating upon the divine light in the heart. The divine presence is there, which is shedding its non-luminous luminosity. Who am I **with** when I meditate? And if I am with Him, where is my liberation? If I have been with Him through life, can I be separated from Him at death? If at death He is with me, does it not mean liberation? Can I go to hell with my God with me?

So you see, all these have to be digested, so that they may give us faith in what we are doing. If you have no faith in what you are doing, it becomes a ritual. If it is a ritual, it is a religion. And if it is a religion, we shall only die to be buried, and perhaps to be awakened on the day of judgement, and our rotten bodies coming up again and going to hell or to heaven as the case may be. It is faith that makes the difference between a ritual and a reality. Love becomes a ritual, when there is only the actions of love but not the heart behind it. With the heart in it, everything is pure. Without the heart in it, everything is dirty.

So, what makes faith possible? Not the liver, *le foie*, but *la foi* — faith! So, let us forget the liver. He who lives is the liver. Forget this liver and remember that liver by using not *le foie*, but *la foi*. Have faith in what you are doing. Remember that when you meditate you are with God. Remember that when you are not meditating also He is there, because He is here [indicates the heart]. My meditation is only to establish a contact with Him, like telephoning a friend and making sure he is there. Or calling, "Mummy, mummy," and she says, "Yes, darling. I am in the kitchen." This is all that is necessary.

If we do this, we don't have to wait till death gives us equal opportunity, or the next life gives us equal opportunity. We all have that equal opportunity here and now. All that we need is the wisdom, the courage, and the faith to achieve that equality of destiny. I pray that it may be so.

Thank you.

19

DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

Lausanne, Switzerland
17 July, 1991

I used to accompany Babuji Maharaj, as you all know, on many of his trips. It was full of ecstasy and frustration — equal measure. There was no midpoint. It was ecstasy or despair. Similarly, either we went according to plan or totally the plan was changed. And I used to be very angry sometimes, because I was his secretary, apart from being the secretary of the Mission, and Jens will remember the several occasions on which I had to telephone him to change our tickets, to book us back home, etc. So, in Sahaj Marg [chuckles] there's a tradition. [laughter] After all, I must be like my Master, you know. [laughter] So, I find I am also in a similar situation now, making plans, changing them, to the frustration of the Europeans. I don't know whether I am being trained or the Europeans are being trained. Sometimes I think I am being trained to bear their frustration and their annoyance and their anger. [chuckles] And sometimes I think you are all being trained to bear my unpredictability. Perhaps it's a bit of both.

But the main function of my coming here, the main reason for my coming here, is that we should learn from each other and profit from each other's presence. To imagine that

only you will benefit would be arrogance on my part, and to think that I will benefit from your purpose would also be equally absurd. We have to help each other, support each other, because we are all going towards the same goal. So, we should not worry about these small changes. Variety is the spice of life. Similarly, uncertainty is the salt of life. If something becomes totally predictable it can be terribly boring.

So, I request all of you to have these considerations in your mind and permit me some freedom of action, remembering that you have a lot of freedom for yourselves. So, that is as far as my changed plans are concerned. I think always you come out the better in this transaction, for which I am grateful to my Master, because that is why we come here — to give and to give more.

Now I have to return to India, and I had to unfortunately cancel the Swiss seminar, but I hope in some way to compensate for it by my one-day presence here today. And I would like to stress that spiritually there is no compensation necessary, because wherever the Master is, he can give you what you have to get. So, this compensation is purely on a human level. We have to remember that we are human and we still require human support, human sympathy, human love. And that is why Babuji Maharaj used to come to Europe. He started travelling at the age of seventy-three, very old. He was not strong, yet he considered it necessary to come abroad, and that was in recognition of this human need.

So, I am trying to follow him in his way, and this is the seventh continuous year I have been travelling to Europe. I came twice last year, it is possible I will come again this winter, though it is not yet finally planned in any sense. [laughter] Previously I was able to give you all six months time, even eight months time, to plan. It was for your convenience, because many people avail of cheap flights, which have to be booked well in advance, and which are non-

refundable. Also, sometimes in Europe I hear these comments, that we have to book a place in advance, sometimes even one year. It was out of consideration for these reasons, personal and organizational, that I used to give you substantial advance and make my plans, and tried to go by those plans. If you forget your impatience at small changes [chuckles] in my plans, you will agree that more or less, my plans have functioned according to schedule.

But for the future I have to definitely seek your co-operation, because with increasing demands on my time, with the growth of the Sahaj Marg family worldwide, I can neither make such definite plans nor spend so much time in Europe. I have also felt that I have been very indulgent towards Europe. Three years back I stayed in Europe for five months continuously, and I am sad to say even in those five months there were people who did not come to our seminars. First it was the holidays; they had to be with their families — two months. Then it was their work, then it was a conference in Denmark, or conference in Timbuktu.

My wife used to say, I think very sensibly, that if you are available for too long a time in Europe, more and more people will find more and more excuses for not coming to see you, whereas if you are there just for one week, at least you will know who is serious and who is not. I think it is a very sensible and wise comment she makes.

Also, I could be indulgent in the past because I did not have much work to do. Now I have to adopt excellent Swiss habit of not saving money but of saving my time. [laughter] Therefore, for the future please be assured I shall come here, but my halt in Europe will be very limited, and those who wish to take advantage of my presence will have to adjust their schedules to those periods and no more. Otherwise, you will have to make very expensive and very troublesome trips to India to see me. Also, please remember I am getting older, and it is not easy for me to travel. So, have some consideration,

some sympathy, I can even say, some mercy for me, because you must remember I am a human being, I have demands on my time, I have demands on my personal self, and I have demands on my health, all of which I have to place at your disposal.

But in the old French tradition of *partage*, I have to divide all my availability equally among abhyasis all over the world. Now, recognizing that I cannot be everywhere all the time, and having had to cancel my first visit to Russia this year, I have come to the conclusion that I have to prepare a team of capable people, to take over some of my responsibilities and duties, by visiting countries where I shall request them to go. This year, for Russia, some seven or eight of our preceptors are going for two weeks to Russia. In October, Patrick Fleury has kindly agreed to go to Madagascar. So, it will be necessary for me to send now people everywhere. Now you have to accept this.

It is like an ambassador to a government. When he goes to visit another government, he represents his government and they have to accept him as such. So, more and more perhaps in the future you will have to accept my people who come to see you, maybe from India, maybe from any other country, because it is a good sign that the Mission is growing so fast and spreading geographically — so well that spiritually, one person may be able to do it, but physically it is not possible.

The next point is that established Missions in countries like Switzerland, France, Germany, Denmark, and Italy will have to get used to the idea of not seeing me physically here, perhaps, or if I come, I may only come only to Augerans, because the ashram is there, and people of Europe will have to learn to come there. I cannot always suit my convenience to yours. I have tried my best to do it in the past but Europe cannot have the sole monopoly on my time. I have really been neglecting India these seven years. And therefore I have to go back and travel around India because, after all, the heart of this

Mission is in India. That is the heart, and the heart has to be looked after, the heart has to be strengthened, protected, cherished, nourished, because it is from the heart the circulation goes everywhere.

So you see, for all these reasons I have to be a little uncertain, a little flexible, and you have to be flexible to match my flexibility in future. It is not that this is the crazy Indian way of doing things. Indians are not crazy by any means. If they had the facilities and the prosperity you enjoy, you would have seen the flower of humanity in India. Not in Europe, not in America, not in Japan. Truly, there would be flowering in India if we had your wealth, your prosperity, your facilities. So, let us not think that Indians are crazy or they do crazy things. Crazy things, crazy *choses*. [chuckles] I call it *crazyesse*, my own word in French for craziness. Like *tristesse*, *joyesse* — *crazyesse*. *Le folie du maitre!* So, whatever it is, you see, there are so many reasons.

Now we have put all the vegetables together, boiled them in water, and made a soup of it. The conclusion is, you have to give up your addiction to work and your wonderful way of living, and transfer your God from your workplace to where it really belongs. Seven years I have tried my best to bring this flexibility in you. For seven years I have been hearing that you are at work on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays. Already. For seven years I have also heard that on weekends you are not available because your wife is at home, your children are at home. So, if for seven days in a week you cannot come, I don't see any purpose in coming here. And it is not enough to tell me, "We are here."

If you are a mother, if you are a father, you know. If you have seventeen children and one child is missing, you wait for that missing child. That sixteen are at home is not enough. If I am waiting for my seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, seven hundred, eight hundred, two thousand and I get terribly

disappointed, when year after year I have been hearing from the same people, these same excuses of work and families, both of which I have, too. I am not an idle fellow without a family. So, I get terribly annoyed sometimes, too, especially when I see kilometre-long queues of people going on cars, caravans, boats on top, bicycles on top. If you can spend thousands of francs on polluted beaches pretending to enjoy yourselves, I can't understand why you can't come for three days for a spiritual holiday.

You know, this year one abhyasi from Ireland — I was in Scotland for five days and I understood she was coming to France for a two weeks or three weeks holiday, two months holidays. I said, "I am in Augerans. Will you come?" She said, "I will try." So you see, there are only two ways of solving this. Either you soften up..., [chuckles] you know the alternative, I don't want to say it.

Final point: when I come here, it costs you money. I don't want you to waste your money like that. It is like taxation, you see, all of you pay for my travels. I eat free food in Augerans. I live like a king and it makes me guilty when I feel I cannot serve you to the extent that I wish to serve you. And for the last seven days I have been talking of the *culpabilité*. I don't want to feel guilty about anything. I don't want to eat your food if I cannot return my service for it. I don't want to live in your chateau if I cannot serve you from it. I have no need to come to Europe, no desire to come to Europe, no inclination to come to Europe, no time to come to Europe.

Perhaps, except for Therese and one or two others, I have been in Europe long before you have been in Europe, before most of you were born. I know the Europe of the past, I know the Europe of the present. We are here to try to see what Europe of the future is going to be. I come here only for that purpose, by my Master's grace, working with his authority, working with his powers, using his transmission to create this

future. If in that you do not co-operate, there are other places in whose future I should involve myself.

So, this is a very clear declaration of purpose. In future if there is no co-operation, and abhyasis don't come, I shall consider it an act of non-co-operation with me. Because I have come here once for five months. In 1972, my poor Master and I travelled for three months. You can imagine, at the age of seventy-three, we wandered the face of the earth for three months. We had no Mission here in those days. We had nobody to meet us at airports. I have cooked for him, washed his clothes, cut his hair. We have waited at airports for half an hour, one hour, without anybody to meet us, not knowing what to do next, for your sake. He had nothing to take from Europe; I had even less to take.

So, please don't make the mistake of thinking that I come because I like to come. Perhaps in *My Master* or somewhere, *India in the West*, perhaps, I have recorded Babuji's anguished cry when he was exposed to certain vulgar situations, and he asked me in Hindi or told me in Hindi, "Why is Lalaji sending me to this hell on earth?" Excuse me, this is my Master's statement, notwithstanding our gleaming cars and beautiful countryside and clipped lawns.

If it continues to be a hell on earth, it will be **your** fault. He gave his life for it. Let us at least respect that, and try to benefit by it, using a day's salary, two day's salary. You are all rich enough to afford one month's salary if it comes to it, and make use of such opportunities, because they are getting fewer and fewer. It will get even fewer in future. Remember Babuji's statement that the next Master may not be available for ten thousand years.

So, we have to be very serious about spirituality. Don't think I joke, therefore it is not serious. [chuckles] I try to imitate my Master. He joked when he was very serious and he was very serious when he should have been joking.

Invertendo. This is my appeal to all of you, that as opportunities become less and less, we have to be more and more alert, more and more serious about our search if we are not to miss the bus.

Thank you.

20

ADDRESS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Augerans, France
20 July, 1991

It is a letter addressed to all abhyasis of the Mission everywhere, not only in Europe but in America, Malaysia, South Africa, Madagascar. It has become necessary to consider this, because I find it necessary to have a medium of communication between the abhyasis and myself.

I have already said that I may not be able to travel so much in the future. I mean, the future cannot be predicted, I may travel more; I don't know. But as I see it at the moment, I cannot travel so much out of India. Nor is it possible for me to receive hundreds of letters every month on diverse subjects, and to answer them myself. It's not possible. I don't have the time, I don't have the assistance, I don't have the equipment. And if I did have all these things it would mean diversion from the spiritual work to that of an administrator. I have been in company service for thirty-three years, working thirteen hours a day, fourteen hours a day, and I don't want to bring that sort of life back into the Mission. So, there must be some way of solving this.

For the time being, this is what I propose:

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Mission is growing rapidly all over the world by Master's Grace. As it grows and expands, it must maintain unimpaired its ability to serve people all over the world for their spiritual growth, moral well-being, and social welfare. As you all know, the Mission in each country has its own legal and formal presence in that country. And it has to operate according to the laws of that country. Therefore the Mission has to have a formal organization in every country, which is entrusted with the proper functioning of the Mission, in accordance with such laws. Further, the administrative organization in each country is very naturally preoccupied with the Mission's affairs both legal and spiritual in that country.

I have therefore been considering how to bring a wider approach and a generally expanded consciousness which can achieve the very essential purpose of gaining an overall perspective for the Mission throughout the world. I have consulted many of our abhyasi sisters and brothers who are dedicated to the Mission and its objectives and who therefore, have the welfare of the abhyasis as their first concern.

We must always remember that this Mission is there to serve abhyasis. It is not there to make money, it is not there to build ashrams, it is not there to run cafeterias, or to put up tents, *matelats* [mattresses], all these things. The first and **sole** purpose is to serve abhyasis. The rest are part of that service: what space we need, what accommodation we need, why we need them. And we must always tend to simplify. This year, for instance, I have found there is too much accommodation available and too few abhyasis. It is a waste of money. It is a waste of **your** money. You are all subscribing to the Mission in various ways, therefore the Mission's money belongs to the — in a sense, you cannot of course take away something from

here — but it is your contribution, you have helped to establish this Mission and build it here.

You must point out and ask questions. "Why is there a big tent here with only sixteen beds?" Nobody has asked the question. I find in Europe this tendency to exaggerate personal comfort, magnify personal needs, as if the European is a very special breed of human being. I can understand a polar bear not being able to live in India, we need air-conditioned accommodation, but human beings are supposed to exist. I mean, this is a scientific fact that between minus forty and plus fifty, all human beings must be able to adjust with minimum of artificial equipment. But here it is ten degrees, fifteen degrees, twenty degrees and we are being asked for hot water, heating, blankets, etc. I am ashamed, because I am bathing in cold water.

So, we have got to simplify. Otherwise, you are going to need more and more money to fulfil these same things. Renting is going to cost more year after year; petrol is going to cost more year after year, everything is going up. So you see, the one way of keeping expenses down is, or rather will result, in not being asked for more money. Because you have to support the Mission, you have to run the Mission. You have to provide for yourself all the benefits that you expect.

The only benefit that I can provide is the spiritual benefit, which is free. There has never been any question of paying money for spirituality in this Mission. It shall never be so. But any material benefit has to be paid for. Therefore, we have to consider the world situation. The Mission is a world Mission. It is not a French Mission or a Swiss Mission or an Indian Mission. It is a **world** Mission. Rules differ in various countries, laws differ in various countries. What we can do in one country we cannot do in another country because the legal structure is different. So, we have to find ways and means of creating a uniform approach everywhere. And now, I am not competent to do this, nor, as I have said, have I the time. Nor

is the French Mission qualified to do this because the French people here are naturally preoccupied with their own rules and laws and the finances of the Mission and the *réglement interieur* and the *fiscal,* etc. We cannot burden the French Committee, what do you call it, the *conseil de l'association*, with the purpose of looking for a world policy.

Therefore I have considered it necessary, after due deliberation, to form a committee of such dedicated persons who will constitute the President's Advisory Committee. This committee shall have no executive nor administrative authority. This must be clearly understood. This committee has no authority to make decisions, it has no authority to spend money, it has no authority to do anything except to advise me. Its function will be to examine the proposals made by the abhyasis for enhancing the effectiveness of the Mission, and after assessing them from all angles, make their recommendations to me. Thereafter it will be my responsibility and my endeavour to deal with such suggestions. Similarly, all criticism, either favourable or adverse, may be addressed in writing to any one of the members of the committee of your choice.

I receive a lot of letters which don't require replies, really. Ideally, I should receive only letters concerning spiritual problems that abhyasis face. But if you look at my correspondence, which is approximately in Madras a thousand letters a month I receive, and four hundred letters a month I am sending out. It is crazy. If you look at my files, maybe one or two pertain to spiritual problems, all the rest are material problems. It may be a big problem for you, like marital discord, *probleme de couple*, etc., but it is not a spiritual problem. It is a problem you have created yourself. Therefore the solution must be found by you.

I find again and again in the last four, five years in France, you know, this is the seventh continuous year I am visiting France, and the eighth time, because last year I came

twice — I find people are getting involved and entangled willingly, knowingly, and then coming and weeping after three months, six months, nine months, twelve months, "Chariji, this has happened, what shall I do?" Now you know I have no authority, spiritual or moral, or in any other sense, to interfere in your personal lives. I have no authority to tell you beforehand, "Beware, this is not going to work." Why? Because Babuji said if I even think like that, it will come true. If I think in advance that a marriage will not work, it will fail. So, I have no authority to even think like that. It is a spiritual limitation. Therefore **you** have to decide, you have to judge what is good for you. But I find people getting entangled just like that. It is as if a stone is falling from the sky and you are immediately catching it, not understanding that, with the force with which it is falling, it is going to break your hand. Every single couple problem, marriage problem, here and elsewhere, is a self-created problem, knowingly entered into. It is as if you are welcoming disaster. I don't know whether I should go into this psychologically — but it is a fact.

So you see, don't for heaven's sake give me your personal problems. I am not competent to deal with it. I am not capable of dealing with it. How can I advise? And when I advise, you people tell me, "What can we do? This is the situation here, this is our society. If I don't do this and that, I won't have a companion, I won't have a husband, or I won't have a wife. I am forty, I want to marry, I want to raise children." Well, there is only one right way of raising children. All the rest are wrong. I'm not trying to preach to you from a pulpit or a church, but you know it for yourself. So you get into a liaison with some fool, and he comes and you may become pregnant. The moment you are pregnant, he leaves you. This is too common here. Who is to blame?

So, in future I will not be able to answer any letters pertaining to personal problems, "I'm not getting a job, I have no husband, my boyfriend has deserted me, I am pregnant." You know this is impossible. [chuckles] [laughter]

So, this committee is also being entrusted with examining my own ideas pertaining to the Mission's expansion, to assess their feasibility, cost of implementation and most importantly, the necessity for such expansion. Abhyasi sisters and brothers will appreciate that this committee will make it possible for them to make their needs and their criticisms known in a much larger manner than it has been possible by direct communication with me. I may say that this committee is being set up primarily for this purpose, because when I am apprised of your needs I shall be in a better position to see what has to be done.

I feel that once this committee comes into being, and you all correspond with the committee... You see, it is not that you are forbidden from writing to me, but you should write to me only on subjects on which I can help you. There is no use otherwise wasting your postage and your time. Forget my postage and my time. You are wasting your time writing to a fellow who cannot help you.

So, please, you are welcome to write. Try to write only on matters spiritual. For all other things, like, "The food is not good, the *matelat* is not soft enough, there is too much rain in Augerans," all this you must only write to this committee. [chuckles] [laughter] Yes, I am happy you appreciate the joke. [laughs]

Similarly, any proposals that you may have to make that we require such and such facilities for the children, for teenagers, for adults, for older people who need something — all these matters should be written to one of the members of the committee, preferably one in your own country. If there is no one in your country, to one you prefer. It will be their job to assess the whole thing and forward to me their recommendations. Then I can act. Otherwise, it is like my standing and all of you standing and shouting. I cannot listen; there is no single voice. Each one is asking for something. I don't know which is important, which is not important.

For instance, you are considering parking space in your P.O.S. In India, I wouldn't consider parking space at all. For two reasons: nobody has cars. [Jaughter] Number two, we can park where we want. [Jaughter] See, the rules of your country make it ridiculously difficult for us to handle, even a toilet needs a P.O.S.

So you see, in this country we have to define our objectives clearly. We have to make proposals which are acceptable and possible. We have to study the availability of money and see whether this proposal, though ideal, can be implemented or not. We have to consult our legal, our prefectural, our accountant people, you know, *compatabilite,* and decide whether it is within the framework of French law. So many things are necessary before we can make certain things.

We want to build a meditation hall but we still don't have a P.O.S. So, people say, "Why we don't have a meditation hall, Chariji? You are having one in Madras." Because we are in France. "Why cannot we have more toilets?" You know we built toilets at 150,000 francs cost, and to destroy them we spent another 150,000 francs. Which is crazy. In no other country could this happen. To destroy something which you have built. We could have been fined or something. They could have said, "Pay a 20,000 franc fine to the municipality." "Okay." But we had to destroy it!

So, please make suggestions which are practical. If we receive a hundred proposals, maybe one or two are practical — the rest may be necessary, but they are not practical.

So, all these matters you will deal with the committee. Anything other than spiritual, in short, you will refer to one member of this committee. Only spiritual matters will be sent to me. Of course, this does not refer to preceptors' reports. They will continue to send them direct to me. I will similarly deal with the committee, and they will give you the necessary information, too, diffuse the information worldwide.

Now this Mission is no longer, you know, possible to be contained within the geographical boundaries of one country. I cannot deal with only the French Mission. I have to think of overall policies, acceptable throughout the world, modified in each individual case to suit local conditions, local laws, local requirements.

Therefore the President's Advisory Committee will come into effect from the 24th of July 1991, and will have as its initial members:

Mr. Otto Reicheneder of Germany, Mr. Fausto Russo of Italy, Mr. Ole Vaarning of Denmark, Ms. Gabriele Oberwinder of Germany, Mr. Jean-Claude Badard of France, Mr. Kamlesh Patel of the USA, Dr. Mukul Patel of Johannesburg, South Africa. Seven members.

For obvious reasons, it will be preferable that members wishing to communicate their views, criticisms, and needs may kindly do so preferably to a member of the above committee in their own country. If there is no member of the committee in your own country you may write to any person of your choice. I trust you will appreciate the definitive necessity of creating this medium of communication from and with me. 1) a committed body of persons to deal with this development unhindered by other responsibilities; 2) to assess the picture as it surfaces in each case and to facilitate the best possible solution in every circumstance.

For the future, I would ask — it would be my personal opinion, and I trust that you will agree — that the members of this committee should not be office bearers, in any Mission in the world. But at the moment I have no choice. These are the dedicated people, most of them are full preceptors, they have the interests of the Mission at heart. So, until the Mission is big enough to provide more talent of the heart — head we have enough in Europe, you see, we can kick them around, like playing football and not miss anything — but heart we need. People with heart who have the interest of your heart

and the Mission's heart in their heart. I consider this choice of committee members, for the moment, the best available choice.

I also trust that you appreciate the necessity for addressing all your letters ***only*** *to a member of this committee, thus ensuring that I do not receive several hundred letters on the same subject, but a single opinion or proposal from the committee addressed to myself. I consider that this is the only way of permitting me to work more and more for your spiritual benefit while simultaneously ensuring that all the material needs of the abhyasis in the Mission are attended to speedily and effectively.*

I pray that by my Master's grace this committee will function appropriately to fulfil its purpose, with Master's blessings to all of you.

I think all of you will agree that this is a necessary step in the right direction, so that not everybody discusses everything, but all have the opportunity of expressing their views, their opinions, their requests, their demands, to a committee which does not belong to any country, but is a committee entrusted with the duty of examining your proposals, your grievances, even your approbations. You can write a letter of congratulation to this committee, I hope many of you will, that such and such work has been done beautifully. For instance, we have sent a pair of gates from India, I hope you all like it. So, it would be nice to have occasionally some letters saying, "*Voilà*, wonderful work!"

So, all this will be done by the committee. They are going to have a big job. Some of them have been thinking that I am on holiday in Europe, but these seven people at least will realise what sort of a holiday it has been, and no doubt they will wish for a holiday later. [chuckles]

Thank you.

21

LOVE AND SURRENDER

Châtel-St.-Denis, Switzerland
20 October, 1991

I wish to thank all of you. I have not thanked anybody all these years, because I think it is something artificial. And I am not going to thank you for your love or your kindness or anything like that, but for the element of co-operation in all of you, because some abhyasis from outside have remarked on your growth here. That makes me very happy, and for that happiness I am thankful.

This morning we had some excellent talks, valuable for their content, but more valuable for the attitude they showed. They were all speaking from the heart. I would like to condense all those speeches and give you the conclusions they were aiming at. I am sure you all have noticed it. The first is that the head blocks the heart. Everybody who depends on their head too much is automatically blocking their heart. You know how easy it is to block the flow of water in a pipe, or of steam. The subtler a thing gets, the easier it is to block it. Love is a very subtle thing. We say love is God, so it is the most subtle thing in creation. And anything can block it — suspicion, mistrust, anger, annoyance, lack of faith.

So, why is character-making so important? For this reason. Because, unless we transform ourselves so that there is a free flow of the subtle essence of existence, we are going to destroy ourselves. People who live in cold climates know that a little water in the pipe, when it freezes, can burst the pipe. So, when love freezes in the heart, that heart will surely break. All broken hearts are the result of frozen love. It has nothing to do with betrayal by a friend or an enemy, or anything like that. Those are excuses. The real truth is, we break our own hearts, and it is foolish to blame anybody else for breaking it.

Therefore, the spiritual law says that the more we are betrayed, the more we must trust, the more we must love. This is absolutely necessary, even for your material welfare. If you close your heart because the first man whom you meet or the first woman you meet cheated you, you are lost. So, please remember, you break your own heart. Don't blame others. I hope you have understood this. It applies to men, it applies to women, because the heart is never a male heart or a female heart. It is a human heart.

So, we have to learn to trust, to learn to depend on others, to learn to give, give, give — unendingly. Because, the most subtle is the most difficult, and to conduct it out of us ourselves, to become a channel for the divine essence, this must always be open. When we **think** about this, we will be destroying ourselves, without any doubt, because the intellect and the mind can only give you all the reasons why it should not be open. The mind cannot give you a single reason why it should be open. Therefore, we have the conflict between the mind and the heart always.

The second lesson is the white flag. People have been saying, "We have to surrender to the Master and to God..." All this is nonsense — blah, blah. But the fact of having to surrender is reality. I would suggest that it is the first reality in our spiritual enquiry. To whom are we surrendering? My conclusion is we surrender our lower nature to our own higher

nature. So, the surrender is to my own Self, so why are we afraid of surrendering? It is only when we have these artificial ideas of a god or a master or an enemy, you know, that surrender becomes something obnoxious, something like a sign of defeat. But when I surrender my lower nature to my **own** higher nature, it is **my** victory over my lower self, and such people should be able to walk with their head held high in pride, and with fearlessness.

Now, you must understand that I am not speaking of courage. Fearlessness is not the same as courage, in my mind. Courage is something which comes in a particular situation. Courage is a response to a situation. Fearlessness is a permanent quality. I cannot say what I am fearless about. Like a man or a woman must learn to **become** love, we must also **become** fearless. Love becomes a state of being; fearlessness also becomes a state of being. Courage comes and goes, but not fearlessness, because fearlessness is not aimed at any particular thing.

Now I come to the most important thing, that fearlessness cannot protect itself. Why? Because every protection that we adopt is a sign of fear. So, a fearless person has no protective devices, no protective attitudes, no protective character, but he is totally open to everything. So, if a fellow has a gun in his hand and he says, "I am fearless," we should laugh at him.

So, fearlessness finally means the same thing as love. Because love must be open; fearlessness must be open — totally, at all times. Therefore, only one who has become love can be fearless. I think this is a thing which we must very seriously think over, understand, accept, and use it to transform ourselves.

These are two important things I wanted to tell you from what these talks were about this morning, and so in our relationship between ourselves, and in our relationship with the Master, with God, with anything, the base must always be

of love, which must be reflected in an attitude of total fearlessness. Otherwise, we are reacting to every outside stimulus with an initial fear, leading to protection of the self, which leads to our closing the doors against an enemy who may not be there at all. Therefore our doors remain always closed, and it is only occasionally opened. And it is a pity that, for instance, in Christianity Christ has to say, "Knock and it shall be opened unto thee." I think it is a great pity. It would appear that even God was afraid — the God of Christianity — and He had to close His doors and ask us to knock so that He can open the door from inside! This is why spiritual people — and I am not talking of spiritually realised persons — even the beginner in spirituality, even the newest abhyasi who has come this morning, must accept that, unless the door is open, that subtle essence which we want to become cannot enter into us because it is so subtle it cannot knock, it does not know how to knock, it does not know where to knock. Therefore, the emphasis in Sahaj Marg on vacuumization of the heart, because now it must come automatically. It does not seek us, but the vacuum inside us inexorably draws it inside.

So, this is the only way of attracting the Divine essence, without waiting for Grace to descend, and all that nonsense. If we want God to come and help us out of His own volition, we may have to wait for all eternity — in fact, to my mind, forever — because God has no mind in Sahaj Marg. That is another reason why we cannot use our minds in spiritual life. Because, there is no parallel device to communicate with at the other end. You know the difficulty of telephoning a fax machine — it has to be in the telephone mode.

So you see, like can communicate with like. So, before I can communicate with that blessed thing which we call God, I have to become something like Him. Therefore, this becoming in Sahaj Marg is the most important step. Otherwise we are babies which are crying without knowing how to speak to their mothers. Therefore babies learn to speak. If crying was enough they would be crying all their lives. Therefore,

instinctively, intuitively, children learn to speak. In spirituality we have to learn the same lesson. We can start by weeping, but we cannot end by weeping. Like children, we have to learn the language of communication so that we can become like that which we want to become.

C'est tout. Merci beaucoup!

22

DEATH

Augerans, France
27 October, 1991

During Babuji's lifetime I found that sometimes, when abhyasis were very sick, he was affected. He was not affected when all abhyasis were sick; only the sickness of some abhyasis affected him. I wondered why. The answer was very simple. Those who thought of him were able to affect him — affect his conscience, his sickness, his life. But those that thought only of themselves were not able to touch him at all.

Therefore, you see the importance of constant remembrance. When we need him most we don't think of him at all. It is common knowledge that when an abhyasi is sick, the abhyasi begins to think of the father, the mother, the husband, the wife — the Master is forgotten. Sometimes the relatives think of the Master, but then only they affect the Master. And when the Master sees them and they are happy because they are not sick, he wonders why they are thinking of him at all at that moment. So, it is necessary that you think of him continuously, because, as Patrick said, we don't know when death comes for us.

So, constant remembrance is a way of training, to think of the Master in such a fashion that we think of him instantly when we need him most — especially at the moment of death. Of course, this is a morbid subject, and in the Occident you don't like to hear about death. But remember, you have to be prepared for it, too. It is inevitable. We need not be prepared for marriage or for a job, but for death everybody has to be prepared.

This brings us to the second important point: Why the Master comes to us in his physical form at all. Is there a possibility of somebody whom we do not know — we are not able to recognize his presence if we have never known him. So, this physical togetherness is essential to make us perceive his presence when he is not there. Now, people are able to feel the presence of the Master when they are happy, when they are well, but many of them are not able to feel it when they are sick. Again, for the same reason — they have stopped thinking of him. Maybe lack of faith. Maybe they believe in their children and in their parents more than in their Master. But again the same failure, that when we need him most we think of him least.

This leads automatically to the third point, that unless I have learned to feel his presence here on earth, I will not recognize his presence when I am dead. Please remember this very carefully. It is foolish to think that the Master will come looking like the Master when we have died. It is foolish to think that we will see the Master coming to us in his physical form when we have died. There are many fanciful books written about death. We are told that when we die, our friends, our lovers, our parents will be waiting for us. I won't risk saying they are lying, but they are certainly very fanciful. To me, they are not real. What will a parent do from the after-death? What can he do which he did not do here? What can the son do for me there which he cannot do here for me? Because, as human beings we are all dependent on the same thing. Can a beggar help another beggar?

So you see, unless we have trained ourselves to perceive his presence, feel his presence — totally, absolutely — while we are alive, we will not feel it at that moment the transition comes, and then maybe that awful situation will happen that, in our ignorance and fear of the afterlife situation, we actually run away from him, because we don't recognize the presence. Therefore these interactions are very vital to our spiritual welfare — during life, after life, and far, far beyond.

So, constant remembrance is not something to be done when we are happy or sad. Now, constant is a thought. And remembrance, as Babuji said, brings the Beloved to our presence. If I remember him and his presence is not felt, it is not working effectively. So, there are many steps in this process. If abhyasis are continuing their practice questioning the need for a Master, they will only remember him in a negative way. "Why do I need this fellow?" It will not work. It is like dating somebody. What is the use of dating someone?

So, we have to remember with love — then that love is reflected back to us as the Master's love. Remember that the infinite presence can manifest in any one of infinite ways. It depends on us how that presence comes to us when we need him. I am reminded of that famous statement of the Gita, where Krishna tells Arjuna, "As you think of me, so I come to you." God can come as a fire-breathing monster, if I think of Him as a fire-breathing monster. He can come as a soldier, if I think he is a soldier. He can come as a friend, if I think of him as a friend. As the Master, if I think of him as the Master.

So, the Master is limited in his ability to help us by what we think of him. It is a fact. The Master in himself is nothing. It is foolish to say the Master is great, the Master is kind, the Master is universal, etc. He may be anything. What is he to me? It is like the relationship between a man and a woman. What is this man to me? He may be anything, a son to his father, a brother to his brother. He is a father to his son. Even a man can be anything. It depends on us what we make of him.

Therefore the secret, that even in married life a woman must make her husband a husband, instead of saying, "He is a useless fellow." We create that in the person which we desire in him. And if we are only going to approach him as a lover, it is a loving affair. Therefore the importance of every woman starting a love affair thinking the man is her husband, not merely a flirtatious affair. I don't see any *affaires de coeur* today, only *affaires de corps.*

So, what happens to the heart about which we are speaking here? When we can only physicalize love, and know love only in its physical aspects, how in the name of heaven are we going to elevate this love to the level of the Master and beyond? So, we limit this potential, this infinite and divine potential of love, by making it into a corpuscular stuff — a physical thing. It is our fault.

So, if you want to see the infinity and the divinity of the fellow you call the Master, you have to learn to liberate this love from the body and let it assume its real proportions, its real potential. It is like perfume in a bottle: unless you open the bottle you are not going to smell it.

So, this remembrance, this love of the Master cannot be a real thing in your life unless you are prepared to release love from its corporeal prison in which you are living now. Give it its freedom; it will act upon you and everybody else in a universal divine fashion. So, beware of this love. It is like a man in prison. He can do nothing. So, love in a prison can do nothing — not for you, not for everybody else. Who will present it? Each one of us. We talk of the heart, but if the heart is there, this love should be free. I am not talking of free love, but of a love that is free — there is a big difference, and it is better we should understand this difference. There should be a loving freedom, but not a freedom in loving. Again, a big difference.

So, the Master comes to teach us how to do this, how to liberate this extraordinarily powerful source, this divine

source, which I have entrapped like air in a bubble, and that bubble looks fascinatingly beautiful. It scintillates with colours in the light, but it is so fragile that anything can break it. This is the state of our so-called love in modern society. Anything can break it. You don't have to wait for death. Death is only for the saint. For us, we don't need death at all, because we are dying before we are even beginning to live. We are walking and talking like puppets, reacting to the same situations in the same nauseating ways, behaving in the same humiliating fashion, selling ourselves for trinkets, seeking protection in prisons. You know, some prisoners, when they are let out, want to go back to prison. They find security. We have become so mentally hollow, our security is in these prisons of love. And when we talk of liberating this love, and to be really free, they are so afraid — they will not accept this idea.

The success of a spiritual adventure is not in the hands of the Master. It is in **your** hands. This you must realise categorically. He won't help you unless you want to help yourselves. And so long as we remain stuck in this muddy whirlpool of human love, which demeans us, humiliates us, we cannot find freedom in love, but only death in love. Therefore, we are dying again and again and again, without ever living between these deaths. What is the use of being born again and again, if only we have never lived properly? Until we live properly we cannot escape death. It is like a lesson in class. Until it is done correctly you cannot go to the next lesson. This is a big problem today.

And talking of loving the Master is no use. Loving in what sense? Again, if it is going to be in the physical form, it is again the same prison — in spirit you are falling, substituting one love for another love. There is no substitution process which can work here. You see it in our lives. For a woman, one man after another man after another man. She is miserable, heartbroken. Same for the man. Woman after woman after woman. What is the point? Same tragedy, same

heartbreak. Look under the white skins and their beautiful faces. Lie after lie after lie. That is why we cannot elevate ourselves. No substitution for elevation. Am I able to elevate my love out of this mundane, muddy, terrestrial existence into the higher ways of life? If I can say yes to this question, I am making some progress, but if I hide behind all these artificial ideas of security, wanting a child... What on earth for? Why a child? Only if it happens naturally. If you are able to throw yourselves at the man's head just to have a child? I mean, we do that with our cattle and our sheep on the farms. Men and women should not mate like that. Animals mate. Human beings **love**. If, out of love, a child is born, it is good.

So you see, so much warping in our tendencies and our thoughts. Master says they have to go. The Master must be able to propose to us and we co-operate, where we refuse to waste our love on some fantasy, you see. Just to have a child, or just to have an affair, just for security. If you are not able to do this, you will continue to suffer and suffer and suffer. There is indeed no end to this, believe me. No Master can change this. No God can change this, because it is your desire, your action, your possibility.

So, if you want to change, we have to change our attitude to existence, raise our demands to the highest possible extent. Where, instead of a man or a woman coming to satisfy your desires or your demands, why will God come to your fulfil your cheap desires? For physical love, for security, for a child, you don't need God. There are enough men and women going around. If you want a God to come to you, if you want a Master to come to you, make a demand which only a Master can satisfy or God can satisfy. Like I don't use a crane to pick up a needle, a mere needle cannot break a crane. Let us sit and see the meaning. It is like saying, "Chariji, bring a crane to pick it up."

So, what the Master comes as, for you, depends on you. If you want him as God himself, seek the God in him. If you

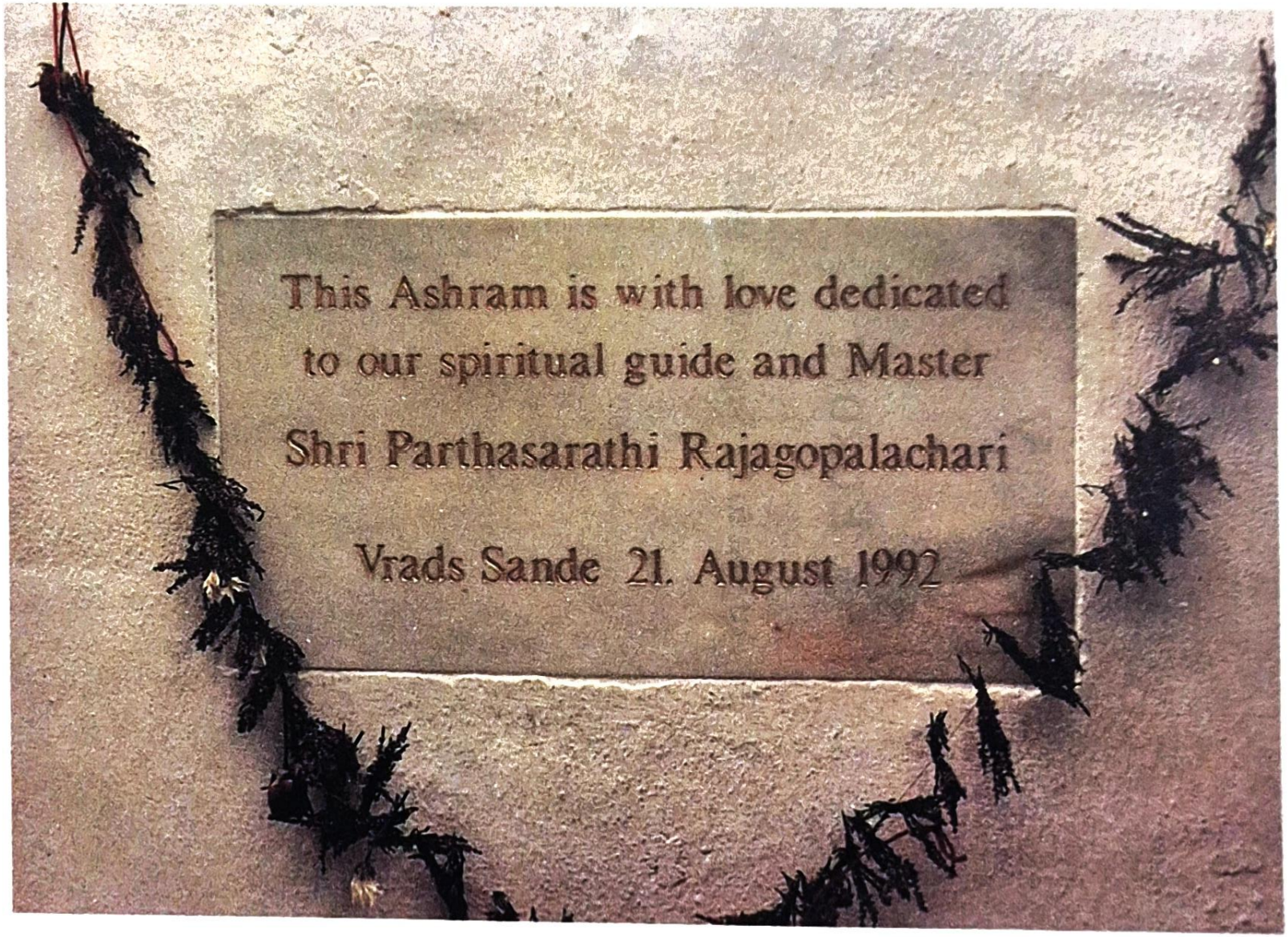
want him as a doctor, he is prepared. You want him as a servant? He is prepared to take up your baggage and put it in his car. Be sure that you use the fellow properly. Therein lies the wisdom and the possibility of success in your spiritual life.

Thank you.

V

EUROPE

14 August to 21 September, 1992


This Ashram is with love dedicated
to our spiritual guide and Master
Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari
Vrads Sande 21. August 1992

A Life of Dedication

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DEDICATION, COMMITMENT, WORK

Vrads Sande, Denmark
14 August, 1992

I welcome all of you to this first preceptors' meeting in Vrads Sande. There is nothing historic about it. I don't believe in history, for the simple reason that history deals with the past. We would like to deal with the future. So, in that sense I want that people here should be prepared to create history, write a new history of humanity and its possibilities which, later on, historians may say has been achieved. It is like a natural history, not for our own pleasure or aggrandizement.

But, like the science of palaeontology, when you cut into the earth layer by layer, you find the various geological eras clearly before you on a vertical scale. There it is something natural, here we wish to do something oriented towards a specific purpose and a goal. The specific purpose in the long-term context is to realise the plans that my Master had for the future of humanity. The short-term goals are to deal with our abhyasis who come to us, so that each one of them can contribute to that long-term goal, by achieving in themselves what Sahaj Marg promises with our help, with our assistance. So, we are here as historians of the future.

I hope all of you understand the importance and the significance of such a role. We don't write history, we try to create history. The history, not of wars and suffering and pestilence, but the history of joy, fulfilment, and evolution. Preceptors have a very definite and significant role to play in this. Those who don't are betraying the trust that the Master has placed in them and they are also betraying the promise that they gave to themselves when they accepted the job as a preceptor. I am emphasizing this aspect because preceptors too often feel that they have nothing to do but to give a few sittings. The better ones write a diary, the lazier ones don't even do it.

We are not here to give sittings. Sittings is a means, transmission is the use of a capacity given to us by the Master, cleaning is a technique. Like a man doesn't become a carpenter by owning a set of tools, we don't become preceptors by just being bestowed with the capacity to do things. We become preceptors only when we do things, when we have done things, when we have something to show for the result. Too often we have things which we don't use and we are proud of that. We have intelligence which we don't use. Even the most intelligent don't have the intelligence to use that intelligence for their welfare and for their evolution. They go berserk. So, having a capacity can be a danger if it is not used in the right way, because if it is not used in the right way it is used in the wrong way.

We must make sure that all that Babuji has given us is used in a way in which his purpose will be achieved, his plans will be realised. For this, dedication is necessary, love for the work is necessary. There is too much talk of loving the abhyasi. We must love the work. When we love our work, we automatically love the abhyasis, whereas when we love abhyasis we may not do the work, and in fact it may lead to complications.

So, love the work. Why do you love the work? Because you are supposed to love your Master. Love the Master, love his work, then you love his plans, you love his dreams for the future, then we shall do something about it. Loving the abhyasis, I don't see any results. What is loving the abhyasi? If you can do something good for somebody then it shows that you love that person. But loving someone and not doing any good to them is ridiculous. You cannot love somebody and not do anything for them. You cannot love somebody and do harm to them, whereas if you do good to them it doesn't matter whether you love them or not, there is some result. So, less talk of love, more talk of work, more talk of results, more talk of dedication, more talk of trying to live up to the promise that we have, at least in principle, made to the Master when we accepted the job of being a preceptor.

Each one has his specific place to play, his part. Let there not be any power struggles, let there not be mutual jealousy. Always I find in the old myths and religious stories that the smallest and the weakest do much more than the strongest and the most powerful. It is in the myths of all civilizations.

So, let us try to be humble but dedicated preceptors. Let us try to do and achieve and thereby show our love, than just to love and not do anything for people. Let us be alert to our responsibilities and our opportunities. Every time somebody comes to you who is not an abhyasi, he is an opportunity. Every time you let him go away, it is a lost opportunity to serve — not to add one more abhyasi to the list, but to serve someone.

Here in Denmark we have the maximum number of full-preceptors outside India. Had they done their job in all these twenty years since they have been there, Denmark would have been a transformed nation. It is unfortunate that this Mission has stagnated till now.

I think it is a sign of Babuji's grace and his continuing love for Denmark that we are here today in Vrads Sande trying to renew that spirit and that stream of life-giving spiritual force that he brought into this country in 1972. Twenty-one years have gone. I hope in the next twenty years we shall see the flowering of Denmark and the bringing forth of the truth of what he said, that someday Denmark will be the capital of this, the spiritual capital, that the Danes will rise spiritually. At least in Denmark it should happen, where Babuji Maharaj has put so much of his love and time. It is no use talking of "Babuji, Babuji, Babuji" all the time, talking of your love for him, if you don't contribute to the purpose for which he came here. This is applied to all preceptors, not only to the preceptors of Denmark. It applies to all. We are only talking of Babuji's love.

It is like talking of the sunshine and the farmer is not cultivating his fields. Of course the sun shines. It is saying, "Wonderful rain, it has been so dry," but nobody is doing anything to collect the water or to irrigate their fields. Similarly, we are going on talking of Babuji's love and doing nothing to harness that love into creative channels, purposeful channels of evolutionary progress. It is a weakness I find that people who go on talking of Babuji and his love don't do anything, whereas a man who never even speaks of Babuji does a lot. Our capacities are unlimited when we think of the Master and do something; literally, there is no limit to what we can do. So, why don't we do at least something?

I think the time has come to get back into the realities of the spiritual life. Understand that you are not living for yourself any more. Understand that all your needs will be fulfilled by Him, if you are faithful to His work and faithful to Him. Understand that in the fulfilment of your work with others lies the fulfilment of your own life's purpose, that in their happiness, lies your happiness, in their health lies your health, and that in His happiness with you lies your final happiness. Otherwise, there is no happiness on earth for us.

That is why perhaps so many of us are seeking fulfilment in other ways and not finding it, only finding sickness, only finding disillusionment, tragedy.

These are some of the things I should like to impress upon you today, you see, that the life of a preceptor is a life of dedication to a particular purpose. That purpose does not give you any freedom to play the fool any more. You have to be very serious about this work. You are, of course, free to lead your life, your married life, your professional life, your service life, in the best way possible to conduce to the role of a preceptor. They must all support your role as a preceptor. When anything in your life interferes with your work as a preceptor, that aspect of your life must be cut off and thrown away. There have been great artists, when they painted a bad picture, they cut off their right arm. They said, "This arm has failed me!" and they have cut it off and thrown away. That must be the level of our integrity and of our commitment. Anything that prevents me from working for my Master, is against it.

It doesn't matter whether it is a person, a place or a thing, it must go. If you are capable of this sense of dedication you don't have to cut off your arm. Automatically the work will fall into place. People are always imagining, "Oh, does it mean I have to give away my home and my wealth?" Not at all. "Does it mean I have to divorce my husband?" Not at all. It is the creation of a sense of dedication in yourself. When that happens everything else comes in a co-operative way. Till then what was not co-operating begins to co-operate. You can test it for yourself. I can tell you it works. If it has worked for me I don't see why it should not work for you.

I was talking to the teenagers the other day and I suggested that there is a famous principle in life, that we have always to choose between the pleasant and the good. It is a continuing principle, whether it is for children or adults, it is the same. It is always pleasant to be idle, but it is good not to

be idle. It is pleasant to eat, it is perhaps good not to eat. It is pleasant to play the fool, it is good not to do it. So always remember when you are faced with a choice — should I go boating or should I give this man a sitting — which is pleasant, which is good. Decide what is good and do it. It is a very simple principle to follow. For those who are serious about their purpose, life becomes very simple — there is no choice!

As long as we imagine we have freedom, and therefore the ability to choose or the right to choose, life becomes very complicated. We complicate it by accepting various alternatives from which to choose something. If I am in a situation of no choice where I have only one thing to do, only one way of doing it, I have no complications. This giving up of your freedom to choose your way of life, your way of living, your right to do what you like, is surrender. Surrender does not mean going to Babuji and catching his feet and weeping like you see so many people doing in India. It does not mean becoming a beggar. It does not mean becoming his servant. It means giving up all ideas of choice, and doing only what he wants us to do.

In this are implicit the other ideas of obedience, of love. So, obedience, love, surrender. They are three faces of the same thing. You cannot have them individually. You have them all three or you don't have them at all. So, one cannot be obedient without dedication. Otherwise, we are like policemen and military people, that is obedience for pay. Here we obey because we love.

So, finally your work will reflect your love for the Master. I hear too much of this talk of loving Babuji, and loving and feeling his presence and all this blah, blah. I am sorry there is too much of this mushy, emotional nonsense. I wish to show, I wish to see this reflected in your work. When you work and the results are there, then I will know that you have loved your Master. If you are only talking of love, well,

every bird is screeching and we call it music. You can teach a parrot to go on saying all day, "I love Babuji, I love Babuji, I love Babuji." It is no use. Love must result in perfect action. Love for a person must reflect in the action that he desired you to do for him. Love of a principle must be revealed in your working and in your adherence to that principle. And, love for the Master must be revealed in your love for all.

So, your work will be a proof of your love, and that, everybody will see. When you speak of love you are only talking of yourself and people will say, "Well, perhaps." But when you work, they will see your love in action. The proof of this Mission, the test of its efficacy will be what people think of you, and therefore of the Mission through you.

Please remember that we have very great responsibilities which are, after all, playthings in life. I have never found spiritual work to be difficult. It is, of course, sometimes something against which I too rebel. I like to be at rest. Somebody comes and says, "I want a sitting." Momentarily I may say, "What is this darn nonsense into which I've got?" But I overcome it.

Courage is not in not being afraid, courage is in being able to overcome fear. People think that a courageous man is never afraid. Nonsense! Most courageous men are always afraid, but when it is necessary not to be afraid, they are able not to be afraid at that moment. What is the use of courage when it is not necessary? It is like money when it is not necessary. What will I do with a million dollars right in the centre of the Sahara Desert?

Our qualities, our capacities, our strengths must manifest at need. If it is not there when it is needed, it is useless, whether it is there or not is immaterial. So, at need I must be able to overcome laziness. I may be in bed all day long; it does not mean that I am lazy. But when there is something to do, I must be able to get up and do it and then go back to bed — it doesn't matter. We have seen Babuji. Most

of the time he was in bed. Nobody called him a lazy man. But when there was work he did it.

So you see, dedication to the purpose which we have accepted, a total commitment to make his plans work, and a total effort to realise those plans on earth, this is our goal. I hope that all of you will rise to this occasion, because otherwise all these ashrams are a waste of money. It is your money you are wasting. You have all paid for this ashram and other ashrams everywhere. What is the use of putting money in something in which you don't believe? For which you are not willing to work and to realise the ideals of which you are not willing to have sustained work?

When we put our money into something, every businessman knows this, he wants his rewards. He wants the capital to multiply. For us money will not multiply — happiness will multiply, joy will multiply, evolution will go forward with a new surge, creating a new humanity and, as I said, a new history for the future, which Babuji in his mind has already written, which we must see is written in the books of the future.

Thank you.

(Talk given at preceptors' meeting.)

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INAUGURATION OF VRADS SANDE ASHRAM

Vrads Sande, Denmark
21 August, 1992

We have heard a lot about faith and fear. This morning I had a thought that what makes us afraid is our past and what makes us have faith is the possibility of a different future, different from the past. Because whenever we are afraid of the future we are only afraid of the past, that the mistakes of the past may not be repeated, that the disasters of the past may not be repeated, that the darkness of the past may not be repeated ad infinitum. Fear of the future is nothing but the fear of the past projected on the future. Now in a sense, when we have no past, then there can be no fear, but unfortunately it is not possible because we have a past, everyone has a past. In fact if you think over it, we have enormous pasts, not just this past of yesterday or last year or twenty years ago, but past going into the past, deeper and deeper into the past, to the very beginnings of time.

Now, how to get rid of that fear of that past? Which means fear of ourselves. Because after all, my past is a past which I created for myself. I did what I did. I did not do what I

should have done. Two things, you see, what the accountants put at the bottom of a balance sheet or a bill — E. and O.E. — errors of commission and omission. Two mistakes we make, what we should do, we don't do, what we should not do, we have done. Therefore fear is composed of both action and inaction — the results. We are always talking of the fruits of action when we talk of karma in Hindu philosophy. But even more disastrous can be the fruits of inaction, what should have been done at an appropriate time. The heartbroken situation of a wife who could not save a child perhaps because she had no money to buy medicines, or the telephone was cut or the doctor was away. The disaster caused by either inability to act or unwillingness to act. The anguish of a mother who suffers an abortion says, "I don't want this child," and then regrets it all her life — anguishes over it.

The anguish of a man who could have helped a man who has fallen on the street to rise but regrets it later: "I could have done such a small thing to help such a human being which I did not do. I was too concerned with myself. I was too selfish. I was too much in a hurry to catch a bus or a train, so I left a suffering human being to suffer. Today I suffer for it." So when we see people suffering and we cannot attempt to mitigate that — I don't say we can always mitigate it, it is not in our power to do it, but the attempt we have to make, that is our duty. When we make the attempt, failure and success are not of any more consequence. "I have done what I could." That is enough.

So you see, this idea of the past having such a terrible hold on our future that it makes us impotent or it makes us keep going in circles. Let me do that which I am accustomed to do, it is safe, it is secure. It is a fallacy. Because if I am going to continue to do the very same things that I have done, in the understanding that it is safe — there is no safety in repetition. So you see, we have to forget the past and in Sahaj Marg we don't have to forget it but we can remove it altogether by cleaning, it is one of the great benefits. I think it

is a revolutionary concept in spirituality. I have often said that cleaning, in my mind, is more important than transmission. Because if we transmit without cleaning, we are only perpetuating the same condition in a stronger and stronger form.

In a sense that is what modern medicine is doing, pretending to cure a disease while making that disease more formidable, more potent, more powerful. Coming out with ever more strong medicines, making the disease more powerful until we shall one day be faced with a disease which we cannot at all conquer. There will be no medicine for it. So we are creating monsters which we cannot destroy from the seeds of the monsters which could have easily burnt away. We are allowing seeds to grow, you see, seeds of disease, seeds of corruption, seeds of fear, seeds of lack of love. It is amazing how many people complain to me about their lack of love — problems of daughter and mother, father and son, brother and brother. All the possible human complexities are today evident in certain societies and it is amazing how people can have problems with their children and, more, how the children can have problems with their parents.

Because a child trusts, a child automatically trusts, its parents. I have not seen any children distrusting their parents. Then why this feeling that my daughter does not love me? "She hates me!" And the daughter confirms and she says, "Yes, I hate my mother. I hate her so much that I could kill her if I could." People say these things to me and they shock me. People write this to me and I am even more shocked because, you see, instead of seeing our parents in the future as our guides, as our friends, as our philosophers, as somebody who is leading us into the future, they have become the past to us. Why? Because they have done things which have hardened them as images and nothing more. They have ceased to exist for the child. These parents are dead to the children. They have gone against the basic human concepts of what a parent should be to the child. The child has to be afraid, it becomes

insecure. And those who should love and cherish it have become ogres of selfishness, wallowing in their own so-called wealth and richness and satisfaction and happiness and pleasure. And the child is abandoned.

So you see, parents must remain in the future of the child, must not slip back into the past of the child. What Otto said of a teacher is very much true of a parent, of an elder brother, of a guide. We have always to be ahead, not behind. Think of a mountain guide who is walking at the end of a line of people who are roped together to climb up a precipice covered with ice. He has to be up right in front, you see, then the people following him who have roped themselves to him will have some confidence. He says, "No, no, I will tie myself last. You all climb first." What can such a guide do? So you see, being in front means exposed. Exposed to what? Exposed to everything. Exposed to the good, exposed to the bad such as we see it, exposed to danger. That is why when a child feels danger it goes behind its parents, it hides, but the father or the mother must be present in front, not hide behind the child. "No, no, *chérie*, you come in front. I will stand behind you. I am behind you all the time." A child is not fooled by these things.

So are we willing to be a sort of shield for the child whom we have raised to protect it against dangers, real and fancied? Which means, are we willing to take upon ourselves any possible danger that may affect my child? If not, such a person does not deserve to be a parent. It is a pity that in human society, we don't use the same care in breeding that we do with our animals and birds. I think there should be a law on the breeding of human beings — are these people fit to be parents, are they bedding just for pleasure or to be parents?

I think it's a shame, you see, that the care we give to our cows and dogs and chickens we don't give to ourselves, therefore we raise monsters. So you see, we have this ancient idea in the East of fitness for a marriage. Physically everybody

is fit, I mean, animals mate, birds mate, what's so wonderful about humans mating? "So what is this fitness of which you are talking about?" It is a moral fitness. Am I willing to undertake all the rigours of training? When I have a child, it means I have to be its father, my wife has to be its mother. Are we prepared to sacrifice? Are we prepared to suffer? Are we prepared to stand in front of it and protect it from everything? Are we, in short, prepared to be a shield for it, ever in front of it, ever advancing ahead? Nobody holds a shield at the back, the shield is always held in front. If you are that, you are prepared or you are fit to be a parent. Otherwise it is better not to have children, you see, not to indulge in parenthood.

And much worse to be a teacher, you see, a teacher who says, "No, no, you all go in front. I am coming." "No, no, you are a swimming teacher, you should jump into the water first." "No, no. I am a master swimmer, you see, I don't have to get into the water to prove it, you jump." "Yes, but teacher, suppose something goes wrong?" "No, no. I am here on the shore to jump in and protect you." What would we think of such a teacher of swimming?

So you see, there is a heavy responsibility cast upon every human being, male and female, and the family is the first step in that direction. One who cannot be a good father or a good mother, cannot be a good abhyasi, leave alone a good teacher or a good master.

That is why in Sahaj Marg the family life is so important. This is not a place for drop-outs, for people who have run away from society, people who have abandoned their wives and come in search of spirituality or wives who have abandoned their husbands or both who have abandoned their children. This is not a place for them. This is a place for those warriors of the soul who say, "Yes, I have raised a family." "Have you suffered?" "Not that I know. Not that I am aware of." "Yes, but people tell me you have suffered." "Ah. It was not suffering!" For my child, how can I suffer? What I give for

my child is not a sacrifice, it is my Self. How can I give my Self and suffer for it? Can you suffer when you give your love for something? When you take up a bird with a broken wing and take it home and kiss it and feed it its milk, are you suffering? Is that milk a sacrifice? Is it a duty or a pleasure?

So you see, until we have evolved to the level where a sacrifice is no sacrifice, where giving is no more giving but a pleasure, we are not fit to be anything. So it is the duty of everyone of us to take ourselves in our own hands and examine ourselves. Am I what I claim to be? Am I a father? Am I a mother? Is this child mine? Is it wanted or is it unwanted? Today there are too many children which are unwanted. And they feel it. They feel it from the time they are conceived. I have often advised prospective mothers who are bearing the child in their womb to speak to the child with love. Speak to it as if it is already there. It is there. Welcome it, love it. But on the contrary we have only hatred, attempts at abortion and that child grows up knowing it is unwanted. It is disgraceful. It is hated.

What do you expect of a future society in which such children are born? Will there be peace in your future? Not if there is no peace in your present. Will there be love in the future? Not if there is no love in the present. If you hate something which you have created knowingly or unknowingly, how is that which you have created going to love you? How is it going to protect you, nurture you, nourish you? It is going to hate you, disregard you, throw you away.

So you see, unless we can create in the present all that we wish in the future, there is no future. Therefore the message of spirituality is quite clear — **here and now!** There is no future in spirituality, the future is here. "Yes. But you do talk of thousand years of evolution?" That is the evolution of the biologists, not spirituality. If Babuji had the courage to say, "Turn your face from here to here, and he is already there," it must be instantaneous. It must be already here. We

cannot have something which is not already here. I cannot breathe the air that is going to be created a thousand years hence by some chemist. I cannot drink the water that will be created two hundred years later when there is no water today. I won't be alive to do it. The fact that I'm alive here today is proof of the fact that the possibilities exist with me now today, here.

Life, as Otto said, is possibility. Life is not complete, life is a process. It is a process in which we make the possible actual. And what is this possibility? That which surrounds us. What is it that surrounds us? Plenitude, beauty, harmony, love, everything is there around us. Why are we so fascinated with this rather ridiculous place, Vrads Sande? I was asking somebody yesterday a hypothetical question. If an Indian saw this place, he would say, "But why did you pay four point seven million kroner for this?" "Oh we have eighteen hectares of land." "Yes, but it could have been cheaper." "But we have these beautiful buildings." "Yes, but they are very old, tumbled down, not enough space." "We have a beautiful meditation hall." "Yes, it still stinks of horses." I won't be able to answer why we paid four point seven million kroner for this place, because a man who looks materialistically at this place, well, how is this land of eighteen hectares different from the thousands of hectares which are surrounding us? He would say, quite correctly, in his own logic, "Climb up on top of this tower and see the thousands of hectares which you don't own, which are more beautiful than this small piece of eighteen hectares that you do own." Isn't it? It is logical, it is a logic of a different sort.

So what explanation have we to give if somebody should seriously ask you, "Why on earth did you buy this ashram?" I can only say, "We bought it for a possibility." What is the possibility? Like a woman goes out and buys vegetables. "Why are you buying vegetables?" "A possibility." "What is the possibility?" "That I may be able to cook something nice out of it." "What is that for?" "That my

husband and children may eat it." It is all a possibility. It's all in the future, but it is in the present too. If I did not have those vegetables in my bag now, there is no possibility of a lunch.

So you see, all possibilities exist right here, right now and, as Jytte emphasized again and again, without faith the possibility remains a mere possibility. It is never actualized. What is it that prevents our grasping possibilities with our hands and making them ours, making them actual in our own existence? First is the fear of the past. "Yes, but Chariji you know, when I was young my father told me everything is possible." Of course it was possible. "Yes, but I failed." That too was possible, you took over one possibility when the other possibility was possible also. Now, why did you fail? "Yeah! Chariji. I went about with these teenagers." Good. What is wrong with the teenagers? "Yeah, but you know, we got involved in, you know, we got involved in all that teenagers get involved with." Why? "It was possible."

So you grasped the possibility which was not good against a possibility which you did not accept. I have been telling our teenagers here that I'm going to stop smoking in their teenagers' room. Because it's wrong for us to permit smoking when we know it is wrong to smoke, when there is the potency of cancer behind it, death behind it, destruction behind it, and your heartbreak behind it. I don't want you fathers here, after five years, coming to me and saying, "You know, my child has cancer of the lungs." And then you expect me to pray for it. It's not possible.

I believe that when somebody has done something deliberately, knowingly, and is bearing the consequences of that, I don't know whether I should say it, but I believe I should not pray under such circumstances. It is then left to God's mercy. So you see, we have to look even upon prayer, "No, no, no. He is all right!"

Like this AIDS research, you know, which I really, I cannot understand, the amount of sympathy for AIDS

sufferers. How are they different from sufferers with tuberculosis, or broken legs, or broken hearts? Why not a Broken Hearts Foundation? Because it is much more rampant than AIDS is yet. Why this peculiar fantasy and fallacy and fascination for AIDS that the Pope speaks about it, that the President of the U.S. speaks about it? Why? What is wonderful about it? I don't know really. In my Eastern mind I cannot understand. Are we funding so that future AIDS victims may not die? Does it not mean that we are sympathizing with the AIDS victims? Does it not mean that let more people get AIDS so that we may cure it? Of course, it means that.

We don't sympathize with beggars on the streets. We don't sympathize with war-ravaged victims, except for political purposes. Whole nations which are dying of hunger, there is no sympathy for them. But for people who have knowingly, wantonly done mistakes and wrong, committed physical and moral sins and are suffering for them, even the Pope wants to speak about it! It is unnatural, it is ugly. There is today, an obsession with filth, moral filth, degenerate filth and this has to go. In a clean life, in a clean world, there should be curing but not obsession. We should provide ability to cure them. Send them to the churches, let the Pope bless them. But if you take a stance, that there is unlimited money available for it, unlimited research potential being poured into it, the youth, they think, "No, no, it's okay, by the time I get it, it'll all be okay, there will be a cure for it." We are supporting and encouraging the activity that leads to AIDS and this is not moral.

Of course, I can see many people will ask me later, "But Chari, this is not spiritual, what you are saying." If you want to create a new society, you have to make corrections in life, prevent that which should not be happening. Support that which should happen, once and for all. Not create the ability to do the same thing again and again with impunity and in the, shall we say, confidence that I will not get this disease because

technology has made it possible for me to sin without having disease. That is not the way science should take, that is not the way research should take, that is not the way medicine should take. Natural calamities? Yes! Deliberately, self-sought, self-created? No!

So you see, we must teach our children, "Don't worry about AIDS research. For heaven's sake you don't get it!" Why? Because, how can we depend on the research of tomorrow or the money of tomorrow? And, why should we get a sickness so that it can be cured later? It is, I mean it is another fallacy, it is another disease to say, "I can fall sick because I will be recovering soon. I have beautiful hospitals my society supports. We have health insurance." So we can fall sick, again and again, remain idle at home because we have a wonderful government, you know, which protects us. A government which protects you, not from yourself but from sickness, is no protection, is no good government. It must teach you, the government must teach you to say, "Citizens of this state, this is forbidden, this must not be done. It is in your good not to do it."

I remember when we were in that Frøslev, one abhyasi couple disappeared. They did not turn up for about twenty-six hours. I was confused, you know, I felt responsible. I spoke to our organizers and they said, "No, no Chari." I said, "Should we report to the police, they are missing." "Oh. But the police will laugh." I said, "Why?" They said, "It is common for a man and a woman to be missing, sometimes even for weeks. It is their business where they are, what they are doing." Now imagine this society, you see, where a couple can be missing, not for days, not for hours but for weeks and none of us, you know, have the need or the urge to even telephone the police and say they are missing because they may be in a camp, because they may be at some seaside resort. And what is the responsibility of that couple to us, who leave, ostensibly for a few hours and don't come back till the next evening, from a spiritual camp?

So you see we have become too hardened, too coarse, too thick in our skins. We have lost sensitivity, therefore we are able to feel proud that in our country AIDS research accounts for eighteen percent of our revenue, when another country which is spiritual would be ashamed of accepting such a fact. Shame has become pride. Things of which we should be ashamed have become things of which we can be proud. Lack of schools has become pride, more and more hospitals has become pride, but we don't know how to eradicate disease, how to eradicate sickness, how to eradicate ignorance, how to eradicate the lack of a moral feeling for life.

Now all this is opportunity. It is not only teaching history and geography that is scholarly, it is to teach life itself — how to live, how to live a life of freedom from care, how to live without even having to think whether this I should do or not, how to live without having to think over so many things. What should I do now? What should I do next? There is only one way you see — surrender! Because He teaches you what to do — do it!

There is no talk in Sahaj Marg in our ten maxims of what we should not do. This has been often emphasized in my talks, that unlike all other religious injunctions, here it is only what we should do that is emphasized, not what we should not do, because telling a child what it should not do only focuses its attention on that and it wants to try it at once. You know the very injunction, "Don't do this," makes a child want to do it at once, it wants to know why.

So you see teaching begins with positive instruction. "This you shall do, meditate at such and such a time." "Yes, but Chari, you know it's difficult to get up." Lost opportunity! "Yeah, but I can meditate tomorrow." It is in the future. I may not be alive tomorrow. And how do you know you'll be awake tomorrow at that time? One who cannot be awake today at that time has less possibility of being awake tomorrow at that time and even less, day after tomorrow. So as we delay,

possibilities decrease. They just don't cease to exist, they go on decreasing, until a day comes when it is impossible. Impossible means possibility nil! A man who does not wake up for meditation today has less chance of waking up tomorrow at the same time, has even less the day after tomorrow. After a week he will say, "*Thik hai!* [Okay!] I managed for a week without meditation. What's so wonderful about meditation? Nothing has happened to me, I'm still the same old guy. Look at me, nothing wrong! He has been meditating, you know, like crazy. What has he got that I haven't got?" So you see we become hardened to making possibilities impossible.

Laziness, lack of acceptance of that thing which has to be done, makes us progressively hardened to the possibility of possibilities existing in our life, until we become so hard, so crazy, that nothing is possible for us. So, to keep possibilities alive, I must use possibilities. To keep time available to me, I must use the time now. If I don't use it now, the next moment may not be there. It is too facile to talk of the eternality of time, clocks tick-a-tick ticking away. What happens to the time of a man who is dead? What happens to the time of a person in a coma? What happens to the time of a person who climbs mountains, breaks his leg and is in bed for six months? They have time to do nothing. We must have time to do something. The difference is that, you see.

Utilization of time means to use it to do something for myself in a positive, spiritual, growth-oriented fashion. Lying down and sleeping is not such an activity. I mean there is a natural sleep cycle, yes, but not when you choose, not idle. We have to work when we work, play when we must play. But again, lost opportunity because we did not work when we should work, now our play is stopped and we have work when we should be playing — no result in either field. The work is a waste, the play is gone, the child is absent — another lost opportunity!

So each opportunity, each moment is an opportunity which we must grasp. And what does that moment have? It has everything. A moment does not have this, or this, or this. There is no moment for sleep, and no moment for wakening, and no moment for pleasure. I put into that moment what I take out of it. Every moment is, shall we say, pregnant with absolutely universal possibility, eternal possibility. If I take it at that moment, I don't need the next moment any more.

Who needs time? One who has not used his time profitably — he needs more and more time. "Give me three more days!" Every man who is dying, it is said, prays, "Lord, give me a few more hours or few more days in which I can change the past, so that I can change my future!" It is too late! Because when we have left the past unchanged for long, it is like sediment in a river which becomes harder and harder and becomes rock. Now you have to blast it. Therefore, the daily cleaning. Clean it while it is still possible for you to clean. If you cannot clean it today, tomorrow it will be harder! Day after tomorrow it will be even more hard. Why? Because now there are three layers of grossness: the lowest very hard, little less hard, soft. You will only be able to clean the top, the bottom keeps on hardening. So what is worth doing must be done now, what is not worth doing should never be done.

It is not that we do what is good now and postpone the bad for the later, you see — let us meditate now and go to the pub at eleven o'clock, instead of going to the pub in the morning and meditating in the evening. So you see, utilization of time means utilization of the present. There is no future for the man who has no present. If the present is gone, the future is gone. Only the past exists and that past is inexorably going to draw us backwards. So how to overcome the past? By keeping on going into the future moment by moment, inexorably treading on and on, unconscious of everything save the need to keep moving. "Yes, but I don't know which direction!" "He will show you." "What should I do on the way?" "He will show you." "To whom should I speak?" "He

will show you." "But what is this He, He, He business? How can I depend?" "Faith!" So it is necessary for us to select carefully one whom we shall follow.

Babuji Maharaj repeated it again and again, "Having chosen your guru, tie yourself to him with bonds of steel so that neither you nor he can break it again." Without faith there can be no spiritual relationship between two people, there cannot even be a relationship of love, there cannot be even a relationship in bed. Such relationships are casual couplings of animals, no faith whether this man will return to the same bed in the evening. Then why or what are you doing in his bed now? Every woman should ask herself this question, you see. That is why in India in the Hindu philosophy, in the Bhagavad Gita the responsibility for keeping a society moral is laid upon the woman. Man is a casual sower of seeds. He takes his pleasure, you see, where he can find it. It is the woman who must deny, be moral, close the doors.

Where, in a society, the woman is open to every form of attack, that society has lost its moral bearings long ago. How to resuscitate it, how to resuscitate that sort of society again? By becoming moral now. It is not too late, it is never too late, you see, but that should not mean, "Oh, let me start day after tomorrow. I have an engagement with a boy this evening and another with another boy tomorrow evening. After that — *basta* [enough]." Day after tomorrow? Not like that, because if you don't begin now, tomorrow may never come for you.

So you see, the philosophy of here and now, the potency of the here and now, the possibilities, absolutely infinite, of the here and now, are something marvellous. What is this long future we are talking about — which is stupid to my mind, when in this moment of time I can have everything that I need and want; when in this moment I can be divinised; when in this moment all possibilities are there pregnant in my presence as present things for me?

Which child wants a toy in the future? He says, "Mama, I want it today." Which working man wants a promotion ten years hence, or a raise in his salary ten years hence? He says, "I want it now!" So, why should spirituality be abandoned to a future of which we are uncertain, to a future in which the possibility may not exist, to a future in which the doors may have closed and to a future which I may not live to see? So these are questions which you should ask, each one of you, to yourselves. Take your future and bring it into the present.

An ashram is precisely for that purpose. These are not monasteries. I was telling somebody yesterday and day before yesterday, these are not monasteries, you see, where people bearing burdens of guilt and shame come to wipe it off. This is not a toilet. An ashram is a place pregnant with possibilities for one who is able to walk into it with head erect. "Whatever I am, I am here." But there is one thing that is essential. You must be willing to say, "Whatever I have to become, please make me that."

Thank you.

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THE DIVINE PRINCIPLE

Vrads Sande, Denmark
22 August, 1992

Brigitte Smith brought me a book today, and somebody was asking me the difference between the sound when the bell is struck and the sound when the bell is not struck — quite an uncommon sort of question, but in yoga it is very common. We are always talking of the sound of silence. If you remember, Babuji Maharaj said, "The language of God is silence." I have seen, we have all seen him visibly intercommunicating with Lalaji Maharaj. He used to shake his head and say, "*Haan, haan.*" [Yes, yes.] Like that, you see. So it was obvious he was hearing something which we could not hear.

So there is a sound which is not spoken or which is not a sound at all, which comes from a source and the one at the other end, the receiving end, is able to listen to that soundless sound. Then I was thinking over this when we were all sitting in the room and I remembered my experience of light which had been puzzling me for a long time. Because when you look up at the sky you don't see light at all. But you see a planet

and you know there is light, because it is that light which illuminates the planet and makes it visible to us. Here we have the second mystery: light, which is invisible, makes things visible. So the language of God, which is silence, makes things audible. Light, which is invisible, makes other things visible.

So, the origin and the source, you see, at the origin and the source, things have the opposite quality. It is not the visible which makes things visible. Because we would be very eager to say that, "You have this light which is illuminating us." You will have to think over that. And after all, when you strike a violin or a cymbal, you are producing a sound where there was no sound before. So spirituality is full of these apparent contradictions.

Then I was led to the thought which I have been having for some time. What happens in spirituality? What happens in our transmission? Light, which is itself invisible, makes an object visible by illuminating it externally, superficially. The surface is illuminated. The spiritual light, which is invisible too, somehow goes inside and illuminates from inside. And we have this definition of transmission, given by Master, that it is the utilization of divine energy for the transformation of man. So it is the energy of God or as we say in Sahaj Marg again, force-less force, energy-less energy.

I was thinking, in fact, I gave a small talk in Delhi just before I left, I remembered my old grammar lessons that a noun is the name of a person, a place or a thing. That is the classic definition of a noun. Now, God cannot be a person. If he was a person he should have been born. He will die. He should have a size. He should have a shape. He should have a colour. He should be at some place. Or some place must be God. Then it must be somewhere with a geographical location. Or He must be a thing. But He is not, you see, because people have searched, people have called him by all names. He has not answered. People have looked for Him everywhere. He

has not been found. People have tried to see Him in everything. He has not manifested. So the conclusion is very obvious. God is neither a place nor a person nor a thing. Then what is God?

So, one evening I was sitting thinking of these things and it came to me that it is a principle. God is a principle, like happiness is a condition. God is a principle. We cannot find happiness in things, though when we are happy we find the things nice, agreeable. We make the mistake of thinking that we are happy because of something. "I am happy I ate an ice cream!" Normally I eat an ice cream because I am happy. In my experience I have found this. When I am sad I cannot eat an ice cream. When I am sad I cannot eat pizza. I use these things only when I am happy. In fact, only one person in this world who has really understood me, that person always says, "Oh, today is ice cream time for you," because the joy in me is there.

So you see, unless we have joy here, we do not find things outside to reflect that joy back to us. It is like an echo. You shout from one mountaintop across a valley to the other mountain top, and you hear your echo coming back to you. So essentially what is in us, we see outside us. You are sad, everything looks useless. "Oh pizza!" "Yes, but yesterday you wanted that pizza?" "Yes, but yesterday was yesterday." We are not able to say that yesterday I was happy, so I liked the pizza. Today I am sad, so I despise the pizza. So, if we think on these lines, we find that what is not in me I cannot find outside at all. Anything, you see.

If I seek courage, I must have courage inside me. It is a quality, it is not a thing. Courage is not in a spear or in a gun, it is a quality. Happiness is a condition, joy is a condition. God is a principle. Therefore he in whom this principle is present is a divinised being. There is no such thing as God, you see, other than this. If there is a God it is only the existence of this pure principle, everywhere. It cannot be somewhere, at some

time, at some place. If it is a principle it must be everywhere, at all times — everywhere. Therefore it must be here, therefore it must be now. And, being a principle, it must pervade everything, too. Therefore, we come to this definition of God as omnipotent, omnipresent, omnipervasive.

But we make the mistake of saying, "He is everywhere, He is in everything, He is in all times." Then we have the feminists coming up in arms and saying, "Why 'He'? Why not 'She'?" So you see, this ridiculous situation of personalizing a God, which is what we have been doing through the whole of human life. Whether in a fish, or in a boar, or in a Samson and Delilah, or in anything. God is in his hair. When the hair came back he regained his strength. Or, God is in the wishbone of a whale or a chicken. Or, God is an idol or in a pillar or in a cross or just in an empty blank wall. So, God cannot be located in space or seen in the context of temporal time.

Therefore, anybody who claims to have seen God or touched God is either misguided or a liar. There is nothing to see. I cannot see what is in me, others must see what is in me. Therefore, we can see God in others; we should never be able to see God in ourselves. That being so, a divinised person cannot know he is divinised, much less can God know he is God.

Something which Babuji Maharaj said, "God cannot know he is God, because when he is knowing that he is God, there is God and the other." Duality comes into existence at once. So if God cannot be conscious, God has no mind. Sahaj Marg's teaching is very emphatic on this, very definite. God can have no mind, because if He is conscious there will be periods of unconsciousness — He can go into a coma, He can lapse into sleep. Therefore, we have these funny rituals of God being woken up in the morning, put to sleep at night. So, we are fooling with God, imagining he is a bigger human being than we are.

We also say, "God made man in His own image," and therefore God must have two hands, two legs. But when we come down to this understanding that it is a principle — Divinity is a principle, the Divine is a principle — and it is all-pervasive. It is the principle, the presence of that principle in something which makes it Divine.

Then we begin to understand the mystery of offering *prasad*. Many people have spoken to me, that when prasad is being offered, then they see or feel the presence of the Master. Suddenly it is as if the whole place is illuminated, a new holiness, a sanctity seems to come out of nowhere, and people say, "I felt the presence of the Master." In a way it is right, because it is a special presence. In a way it is wrong, because He cannot be present when He is already there. It is not a new presence. But you can think of it as the air in this room which is still, not moving, therefore you don't feel it. If it starts to move you feel it as a breeze. So air, when it is unmoving, you don't feel; when it moves, you feel.

Therefore, when the divine principle moves, we feel it as a presence. What makes it move? It is the expression of the divine principle in you which makes it move. You see, when you use the word in English: "It was a moving experience." "The music was moving." "His condition was moving." "I was moved by his love for me." What is this 'moved'? It is precisely the stirring of the divine principle in the heart, which for a moment comes into action very much like the *kshob* [the original stir] of Babuji Maharaj. When that kshob happens inside your heart, that divine principle is let loose and love flows.

So, to love you must be able to activate the divine principle in yourself. This can be done only by recognizing its presence. "Oh, God doesn't love me." From where will God love you? Again we are treating God as if he is the husband of the woman or the wife of the man, that he should come and hug and kiss and console you.

How can God love us? I do not see the possibility at all. Because when He is in me, pervading me, activating me, moving me — moving me most of all, because whenever something makes me go into that condition which I call being moved, the spirit is awakened in me — the divine principle in me which is latent is awakened. And when the Master transmits and, as we know, he transmits twenty-four hours of the day, it is a continuous motion of that divine principle, a continuous pulsation of that, like a heartbeat. So the kshob is continuous.

Now, remember that in the beginning of time, at the beginning of creation, Babuji Maharaj said that there was a kshob and creation set forth or came out of whatever it was. One kshob was sufficient to create this creation of ours. But here we have the possibility of that kshob continuing permanently for ever and ever. So, what is the creative capacity of the Divinity embedded in each one of us? That was only a sample of what this can do. The original creation is only a sample. It is to show us, "Look at this! Inactive I was. I pulsed once, and look at this enormous creation that has come into being and is still continuing. What can I not do from within you, if you will but permit it?"

So you see, this material creation is an example. It is what you call an *exemplaire* in French, to show us what we can really do if we are willing to let the Divine in us loose. How to let it loose? No fear, no prejudice, no suspicion, most of all, no limitation! If I want to love only according to my choice, it will not work. The God in me, the divine principle in me, will refuse to be activated by my choice. Therefore, the only way of making it active permanently, eternally, is to leave all choice out of consideration. No choice!

In my presence there is no good, no bad. Please remember: no good, no bad, both! Because if I say, good is in my presence, bad is there also. In my presence there is no question of deserving or undeserving. "Yes, but Chari, you

said be deserving before you desire." Babuji Maharaj said it. Yes, that is for you to feel. You must feel that you are deserving. Babuji never refused anybody. It is an attitude that we as penitential seekers must adopt that, "I, my Lord, my Master, I am undeserving, make me deserving." It is a matter of humility that I pray to Him to forgive, I know not what, to make me deserving in I know not which way. By co-operation.

So you see, deservingness and undeservingness are qualities we as abhyasis have to develop in ourselves. It is an aspect of humility, an aspect of craving that, "I, my Lord, who is looking for you to inhabit me, I feel myself worthless of your presence. I feel this abode of yours which is in me, is unclean. It is unfit to receive you." In that sense I am undeserving. Sahaj Marg says, clean yourself. It is very simple. After all, this was a horse stable [Vrads Sande meditation hall] and see today how beautiful it is.

So you see, if I want, or if anyone wants, to become divinised, it means an absolute injunction upon that person. Thou shalt no longer choose! The light does not choose upon whom it shall fall. There are sinners, there are saints, there are potential sinners, potential saints. There is God, there is matter, there is air, all the *panchabhutas* [five elements] as we say, are here, and yet the light shines impartially. It does not choose. If it chose, it would be limiting itself. A choice on the part of light, that, "I shall shine here and not here," would be imposing a limitation on itself. Similarly, when you choose to love this and not this, you are imposing a limitation on yourself.

Now, how to remove this limitation? Give up the choice! Give up the aspect of choice. Give up the right to choose, which is surrender. It is only surrender which can remove all limitations and make the divine principle in you active, universally, eternally. Without it you may be kind in a human way sometime, you may be cruel in a human way

sometime, you may be neither most of the time, and therefore you suffer all the time. But when that principle is allowed to flow, you are neither kind nor unkind, you are neither happy nor sad, you are neither alive nor dead. You are that which Babuji Maharaj said is the ultimate aim of spirituality, that an abhyasi should become like a living dead. He is dead, the principle in him, the divine principle in him is alive.

So some thoughts I wanted to place before you. I would request you to think upon it all.

Thank you.

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INAUGURATION OF HOLBERGSGADE CENTRE

Copenhagen, Denmark
27 August, 1992

I remember telling Jacky once, "He who serves, is served, but he who seeks the service of others is ill-served." So people should remember that. Anyway, to introduce a little formality into this beginning, I am very happy to see all of you. It has been many years since we came to Denmark, but the heart is always here, as you know, because my Master's heart is here. It has been a long period of dormancy for the Danish mission. I'm sorry if I seem to repeat myself again and again, but I remember reading a book by, I think it was H.G. Wells or somebody like that, *The Sleeper Awakes.* It depends on who sleeps. If a small man sleeps and wakes up it makes no difference whether he is asleep or awake, but I think Denmark has the potential to be a giant. Babuji Maharaj said, "Denmark will be the spiritual capital." I'm happy to see signs of that plan of Babuji's coming to some sort of reality — this is the beginning.

Also, we must remember that in spirituality we are never to be satisfied and complacent, because that stops progress,

that stops effort. We just relax. So this is a call to the Danes — Gird up thy loins and walk! Get moving! Get things moving again. Establish Babuji's plan for you all as a reality. People are always talking to me of love for the Master. Our love for the Master must be shown in action, not just in thought, not just in emotion, not just in tears. I don't believe in tears, that is for the weak. We must show our love for him in establishing his dream on this earth.

This is especially an exhortation to the preceptors of Denmark. I think we have the largest number of full preceptors outside India anywhere on earth in this country. Babuji must have done it with some purpose. So, let that purpose be fulfilled. Let all of you awaken to your purpose in life, your goal in life. Let not your dedication be just in words, let it be in action. Let not your love for him be shown only in emotion, but let it be in formulating a real thing, where he only planned for it. He plans, we execute. The future will realise.

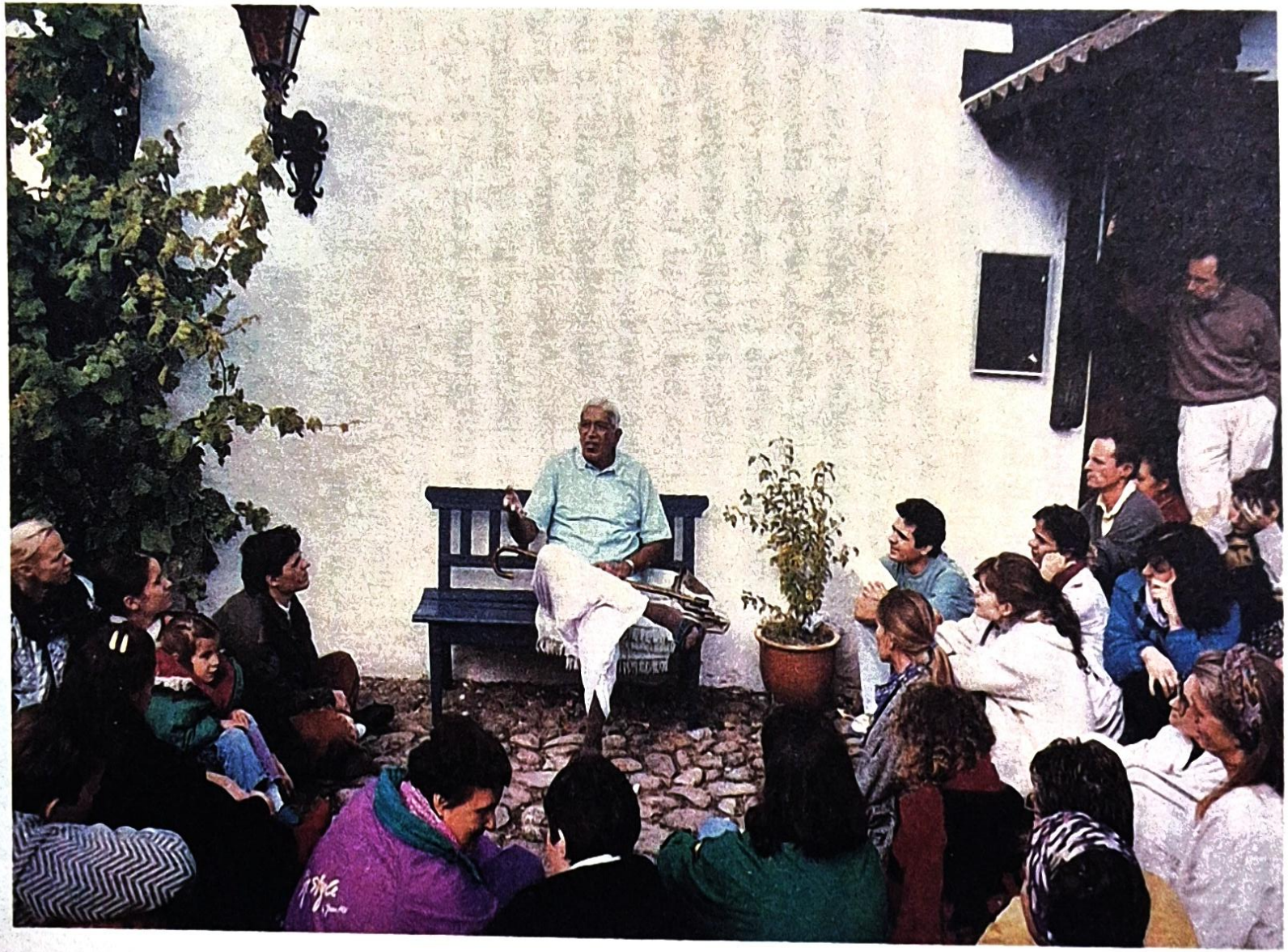
So, I am of course duty-bound to assist all of you in this, but the work is yours, the assistance is mine. Please remember that! He is not responsible for achieving things. We are responsible for achieving things. He shows us the way, we walk. He shows us the goal, we reach it. He shows us what we can be, we become that. So this is our duty, this is our responsibility, this is the joy of our life. In achieving — that will be our fulfilment. I think Denmark is a good field for this. We have been saying it all along since 1971. We have high hopes of all of you here, all of you, including the French, the Yugoslavs, the Swedes, the Danes, because spirituality is not the exclusive preserve of somebody or some nation or some people.

I think it is not an accident that we have meditation halls at virtually two ends of Europe, one in Montpellier and one here. It is as if it is a bar magnet with a north pole and a south pole. And you know when there's a magnet, it has a magnetic

field, and the field goes right round. Nor is it an accident that we have two of our European ashrams, again one in the south of Europe, one in the north, Augerans and Vrads Sande. That is a strengthening of this magnetic pole. So, the work is being established. All that can stop it is our resistance. It is very facile to say that God's work cannot be stopped. God's work can be stopped. Whenever we read the history of humanity and we talk of the dark eras, dark centuries, centuries of ignorance, centuries of stupidity, centuries of superstition, bigoted religious sentiment, cruelty to unbelievers (so-called), burning at the stake, witch-hunting — those are periods when God's work on earth has been stopped.

We should try to work to see that such periods never recur in the history of humanity again in the future. That is our responsibility. That, I repeat again, will be our joy, that we are able to establish not merely a good life for ourselves reflected in high standards of living, but a life of nobility, of courage, of purpose, not merely for ourselves, but for all the generations of the future. This is a duty cast upon us by the Masters, Lalaji Maharaj and Babuji Maharaj. Its joyful realisation will be the sublimation of our life's endeavour. And it is the only thing that can ensure the future of the children and the grandchildren that we love, and their children and grandchildren.

Thank you.



27

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Copenhagen, Denmark
27 August, 1992, Evening

PR: You say, "I made a dream this night?"

Q: I had a dream last night.

PR: Yes. One cannot make a dream. One can make a dream come true but one cannot make the dream. Therefore also we need a Master; he makes dreams for us. We have to work to make it come true. *Comprendez vous? Pourquoi?* So that we may dream dreams which we are afraid to dream and make us make those dreams come true for us. Okay?

You see, I was told somebody is afraid here or not here, because in a sitting that person lost body consciousness. This is of interest to all of us because most of us are afraid when we lose body consciousness, that we are going to lose the body. Of course, we **are** going to lose the body. There is no doubt about it. Not because we meditate, but if you don't meditate you are surely going to lose the body. Now, you may ask, what a funny question or a funny answer or a funny statement, because whether you meditate or not you are going to lose the body. *Voilà!* You have answered the question. So, everybody

is going to lose the body. What is the difference? When we meditate and have this experience of loss of body consciousness, we know precisely what will happen when we die. That will be our condition and it is nothing to be afraid of because we are already experiencing it before we die. You understand? So, what is there to be afraid of? Clear?

L'amour de la mort et la mort de l'amour! [laughter] *La mort est l'amour.* You have pain when you lose the body consciousness here?

Q: No.

PR: Then why should there be pain there? That is stupid people who have said it. Why don't you believe what I say, instead of talking.

Q: For confirmation, I am not afraid to die.

PR: No confirmation. That is because something is said in the Sanskrit — *marana sankata* [crisis of death] is for people who have never meditated. They will suffer because they have never known what it is to die. We know every time we go into deep meditation that we are nearly dead, but since we have to exist and fulfil our samskara, we are coming back. Okay?

And, I have said *"La mort est l'amour." Pourquoi?* How can death be love? Because, by the grace that comes to us in meditation, we are shown what is death. Now we don't know what is death. The normal person doesn't know what it is. He is afraid all his life, struggling to maintain life, closing windows, closing doors, heating rooms, taking out life insurance. Who is going to get that money after you die? Somebody else; you're not going to get it. *N'est-ce pas?*

So, it is the love that the Master, or God, or whatever you want to call him, Christ, that he has for us that he shows to us — this is death. Is it not a blissful condition?

Why I said love and death are the same? Because the love of God is shown to us in meditation when we go deep into ourselves. Remember, we don't go somewhere else, we

go into ourselves, we lose body consciousness and then the voice comes, "This is the condition that you will have when the body is no more."

So, when we go into ourselves, that is death. *Per contra*, when we go out of ourselves, that is really the physical death of which we are afraid. The proof is that people are afraid to leave their homes, people are afraid to go somewhere, people are afraid of meeting people. Instead of just going into themselves, they go into their house and hide themselves — close the door, draw the curtains, pull the blanket over their heads and go to sleep! You see, it is a funny thing, from the time we are children, we try to counter fear by trying to get into ourselves, but unfortunately only physically. We have not been taught what it is to really go inside ourselves, that the only way is meditation, and that the true security of the self is within the self. So there is no death, there is only immortal life. I think that is very clear.

Q: And how about sleep?

PR: Sleep is a physical necessity. It is for physical recuperation. The only parallel, perhaps, that we can arrive at, is that, like sleep is physical necessity, what we call death is a spiritual necessity.

Q: Sometimes in sleep we have the impression that we are meditating.

PR: The more unfortunate thing is that when they are meditating, they are sleeping! [laughter]

Q: Sometimes in sleep, I'm giving sittings to people I don't know.

PR: It is a dream or an experience?

Q: A dream.

PR: No, no, when we are sleeping, also we are supposed to work. If you are working, it is a valid experience. If not, it is probably your inner self saying, "Elisabeth, what are you doing?"

Q: What would you answer an abhyasi who asked you after the sitting, "I don't know whether I slept or I meditated?"

PR: The problem in modern life, one of the big problems, is that we cannot really sleep properly. It is necessary to know what is sleep. A man who takes drugs or, you know, sleeping tablets and goes to sleep, he's not sleeping. In the true sleep, the body is inactive, the consciousness must be active. Because Babuji said, "The will must work even in sleep." Really speaking, normal human beings do not know either how to sleep or how to meditate. They know neither of the two. If they knew at least one of these conditions correctly, this question would not arise. Suppose you put bread before me, and I ask, "Is this butter or cheese?" It reveals three ignorances: I don't what is butter, I don't know what is cheese, and I also don't know what is bread.

That is why we have so many problems in our waking state, really, you know, because only he can be awake properly who has slept properly, only he can be active properly who has been inactive properly. When we drug ourselves into inactivity, that's not real inactivity. What is it that is missing? Conscious inactivity, conscious sleep. When we are able to achieve this, we have conscious death. And conscious death is meditation, or shall we say is **achieved** in meditation.

Q: What about snoring in meditation?

PR: If the abhyasi is not sleeping, it is not important. It is possible to snore without sleeping because sometimes, when you are in deep meditation and the head falls, there is interference with the breathing, that is when we hear ourselves snoring. You know, in meditation it happens — I hear myself snoring and I know I am not asleep, but I'm in such a deep meditation that I cannot also come out of it. Sometimes it happens that, when the snoring is very loud, it brings me out of my meditation. So, that cannot be sleep. We cannot say that everybody who snores is in that condition.

You all know the story, how Babuji put me to sleep once for several days. So we say, "We sleep." We generally say, "I sleep. But that was a time when I didn't sleep, but was put to sleep, not by drugs, not by hypnosis, but by the enormously profound effect of spiritual transmission. I must have slept for, I think, four and a half or five days continuously. I think it was a Friday, I'm not sure, I have to see my diary. At about eleven o'clock Babuji gave us a sitting, and after the sitting I felt very, you know, I cannot say I was sleepy, but something, that I was not willing to be active — total passivity. So, I went and lay down on my bed. Some hours later I woke up, I saw that it was two o'clock, and I rushed to the dining room in Babuji's house because I was, you know, very angry with myself that I was late for lunch. When I went there, Babuji was sitting, some other people were sitting, they were all eating. So I said, "Sorry, I'm very late." Babuji smiled in his usual way, (hm, hm, hm, like that). So, somebody else said, "Do you know how late you are?" I said, "Well, probably an hour or so." He said, "You are three and a half days late!" I couldn't believe it. Then I said, "Babuji, how is this possible?" His answer was that when he was abhyasi under Lalaji Maharaj, Lalaji had once put him to sleep for nine days. I said, "Why was it necessary?" He said, "It is sometimes necessary when we need the abhyasi totally without consciousness, so that the Master can work upon him at any level he chooses."

The analogy was with anaesthetic and surgeons. Do you see how the two worlds run parallel? Techniques are different; one is artificial, the other is natural. The one is for correction, the other is for making, but there is a parallelism. This is what Babuji calls parallelism in nature. One of his articles is there in one of the old magazines, but it doesn't tell much. We have to think, experience, and then understand.

Q: What is *sat* and *tam*?

PR: It is the base. I do not know more about it. I have also been confused about this, because as you know, in the Hindu

mythology, we have the world pictured on the back of an elephant, and that elephant is standing on another elephant's back, and so on, and at the bottom is a tortoise. And I wondered on what that tortoise rested. [chuckles] That is *tam*.

Q: Couldn't we have an experience of the sleep for three days? [laughter] We could save money for food and so on!

PR: I would hesitate to say it, but I asked Babuji, "How many other people have you given this condition?" He said, "To nobody else." I asked him, "Why not?" He said, "Nobody has co-operated with me like you have co-operated." Which is a sad thing, you see. It is always sad when a Master can produce one and no more, because he is there to produce more and more.

Q: How did you feel when you woke up?

PR: I didn't know that time had passed at all. I told you I thought I was three hours late. I felt fresh. I was absolutely fresh. I didn't even have to wash my face. Why, in fact, right here in Hellerup I was giving on average twenty to twenty-four sittings a day, and one day Babuji said, "Your head is very heavy, too much pressure on the brain, too much work. No work tomorrow." I said, "But I have already got a diary full of appointments for tomorrow." He said, "The day after tomorrow no sittings." So, when the day after tomorrow came, he gave me a sitting for five minutes, and I was absolutely fresh.

You see, it is a fallacy to think we need rest. It is a typically Occidental conception. As I have often said, the most ridiculous thing is when people sleep before they travel, saying, "I have to fly tomorrow night." So I wondered, what is this wonderful Western intellect that has created a sleep bank? Can we sleep for tomorrow? So you see, we have many of these funny ideas. One reason is we have never really worked till we are tired.

Q: [inaudible]

PR: No, nothing to do. Nature adjusts itself. One possibility is that we should not be conscious either that we are working or that we are resting. As Babuji used to say, "I'm sitting idle, but I'm never idle." So, this is also another problem with the Occident — that work means physical work — running around, catching buses, telephoning people. Like everything else, the physical is the lowest. The physical work is the lowest work. Those who can work with the intellect have to give up physical work and go up to that. And those who can do spiritual work, they have the highest work.

In this is the secret that we must work at the highest possible level of our being. Suppose a highly elevated Master goes around doing feeding of the poor. For me, it is ridiculous, because poor feeding anybody can do. He is supposed to do higher work. But people don't understand this and they say, "Oh, what do you do in Sahaj Marg? You are only sitting with your eyes closed. You are only working for your own spiritual evolution." Sometimes in the old days, when I used to be very rude and arrogant, I used to ask them, "Who are you working for?" They had no answers. Now I cannot afford to ask such questions.

Q: Would you like some coffee?

PR: I have been smelling it for some time! [laughter]

Q: Chariji, you said that your Master could make only one. Well, now you are the Master and having to find somebody? Babuji was lucky.

PR: When Babuji became complete, full, whatever you call it, Lalaji congratulated him and Babuji said, "Thank you, I will make one dozen." And Lalaji said, "I congratulate you in advance!" And Babuji said, "Look here, I have not found even one yet!"

Q: What did you say to Babuji?

PR: I would have said, "I would make two dozen," but I didn't. You see, when my Master could not make one dozen, of course it does not imply, by no means, that the Master's

power is limited. On the contrary, the Master's power is the only power which can make every human being today like this, if they co-operate. What is the problem? You see, because we want to be ourselves and we want to be something else at the same time, it is not possible. Can I be here and also in Madras at the same time? Not possible. Can a person be a sinner and a saint at the same time? Not possible. We have to give up one to become the other. We are not willing. We say, "It's enough. I am happy as I am. Spirituality we shall take fifty years later." This is the general rule, the general response.

So, what can the poor Master do? People often ask me, "What was the secret of your success?" I say, "I don't know that I have been successful." That is the first answer. Secondly, I was always arrogant. And if something could be done I would do it. At different stages of life it was different things. When I came to my Master, I allowed him to work on me. Permitted, in the sense of 'not consciously', but I was there. And, my secret was that I started working without even his permission. I took the Mission as mine. So, through work I achieved what others are struggling to achieve through devotion and love.

Unfortunately, most people do not know what devotion is. They know even less of love. I am not exaggerating in this. Love is perhaps the least known but most indulged in subject today — love, so-called. So for me, the easiest way was through work, service. And that was also unconscious; I just saw things had to be done and I did them. In fact, Babuji asked me, "Who told you to do this?" I said, "It was necessary to do it; I did it." And he said, "That is the type of people we need." Like that it went on, you see. My father warned me many times, saying, "One day this old fellow is going to dump this Mission on your head and walk away!" [laughter] It has happened like that. My father was far-sighted. If I had known there was a real danger of this happening I would not have allowed it to happen.

You know, I was made a preceptor without my knowledge. One afternoon Babuji called me and said, "I want to give you a sitting. Come." After about forty minutes of the sitting he started mumbling something and I opened my eyes. And he made a gesture like that, you see, [closing his eyes] so I closed my eyes again. After ten minutes he said, "That's all." I said, "What were you saying in between?" He said, "I gave you permission to work as a preceptor." I was angry because he had not asked my permission. I mean, I was really angry, and no joke. I said, "But Babuji, how can you do it? You did not ask my permission?" He said, "You know, I did not know it was necessary." Then he said, "I did it under Lalaji's orders," and I was so arrogant I said, "Lalaji should have asked me!" [laughter] Babuji only smiled, he didn't answer. I was trapped, really.

Next trap was when I was made Secretary. I was in Shahjahanpur for six days or seven days, and he never told me anything. But when I go home a letter comes that I have been appointed secretary. Second trap. And the third trap was in 1974 when he nominated me to be his successor. All without my permission or approval. Imagine! I'm not complaining, but it would have been nicer if he had told me that, "I'm going to do this." You see, there is a difference between taking a girl away on a horse (that used to be the warrior's way), and proposing to her and having her marry you. Not that the latter marriage is any happier, but it is pleasant to the ego. So, my ego was hurt. So, that is the life story of a prisoner. As all of you know, I have a modified prayer of the Mission for myself. I don't know if the Danes know it:

Oh Master,
Thou art the real goal of human life,
I am yet but a slave of their wishes
putting bar to my advancement,
Thou art the only God and Power
to lead me out of this mess!

But, as Babuji Maharaj used to say, "I am telling you it is a joke, but it is also not a joke." I laugh, even I laughed at it, but it is nice.

Q: In a certain way, you do the same things because Lalaji used to say that you should never tell somebody what you are doing. And you do the same thing. You make a transformation, and then people discover it.

PR: I can only do what I was taught to do. Good student! Well, it's a fact. Suppose a man is working under Carl Gustav Jung, let us say. He will practise in the same way as his master practised.

Q: Which means that you have accepted it totally, I mean the method.

PR: Yes, of course.

Q: You also said [inaudible]…

PR: Yes, I did, Ole. My master used to call such discussions as I had with him like this as "family quarrels." That is why I am able to tell all of you these secrets, because I think of all of you as my family, too. Nothing to thank me.

Q: [inaudible]

PR: I hope you're not keeping a door open to escape. From this house, there is no escape. Because each door which apparently opens into the outer world only leads to another room of the same house. Let me assure you of that. My Master used to say that the prison of love is the biggest prison, there is no greater prison than that. Why is there no greater prison? Because in every other prison, the prisoner wants to escape. Whereas in this prison, knowing we are prisoners, we don't want to escape. *Voilà!*

Q: It's a question of choosing the right prison.

PR: No, no, when you are in a prison and you don't want to leave it, how can it be a prison, really? So, there is no question of choosing a prison. Babuji used to say, "My house has no doors." Yet we could not go out. That's a funny thing, isn't it?

Precisely because we didn't want to leave. The lower half of us said, "Get out while it is possible." Fortunately for us, the higher self said, "Keep quiet." Fortunately, fortunately for us. Those who obey the lower impulse are out in the cold. Fortunately, they are few. But that is also part of the greater house of the Master.

Q: This is Christian.

PR: This is not Christian. The whole world is our house.

Q: Christ said, "There are many mansions in my father's house."

PR: "In my father's house are many mansions," is the correct quotation. Yes, yes, it's a fact. You see, what Christ said doesn't become Christian because he was not a Christian. I have told you so many times, Christ was not a Christian, Buddha was not a Buddhist, Mohammed was not a Muslim, and they all evolved. So, why do we have to be Hindu or Christian or Buddhist or Muslim? If they could do it, we can do it. It is not arrogance, but that is what they came to show us. So, religions are unnecessary, you see.

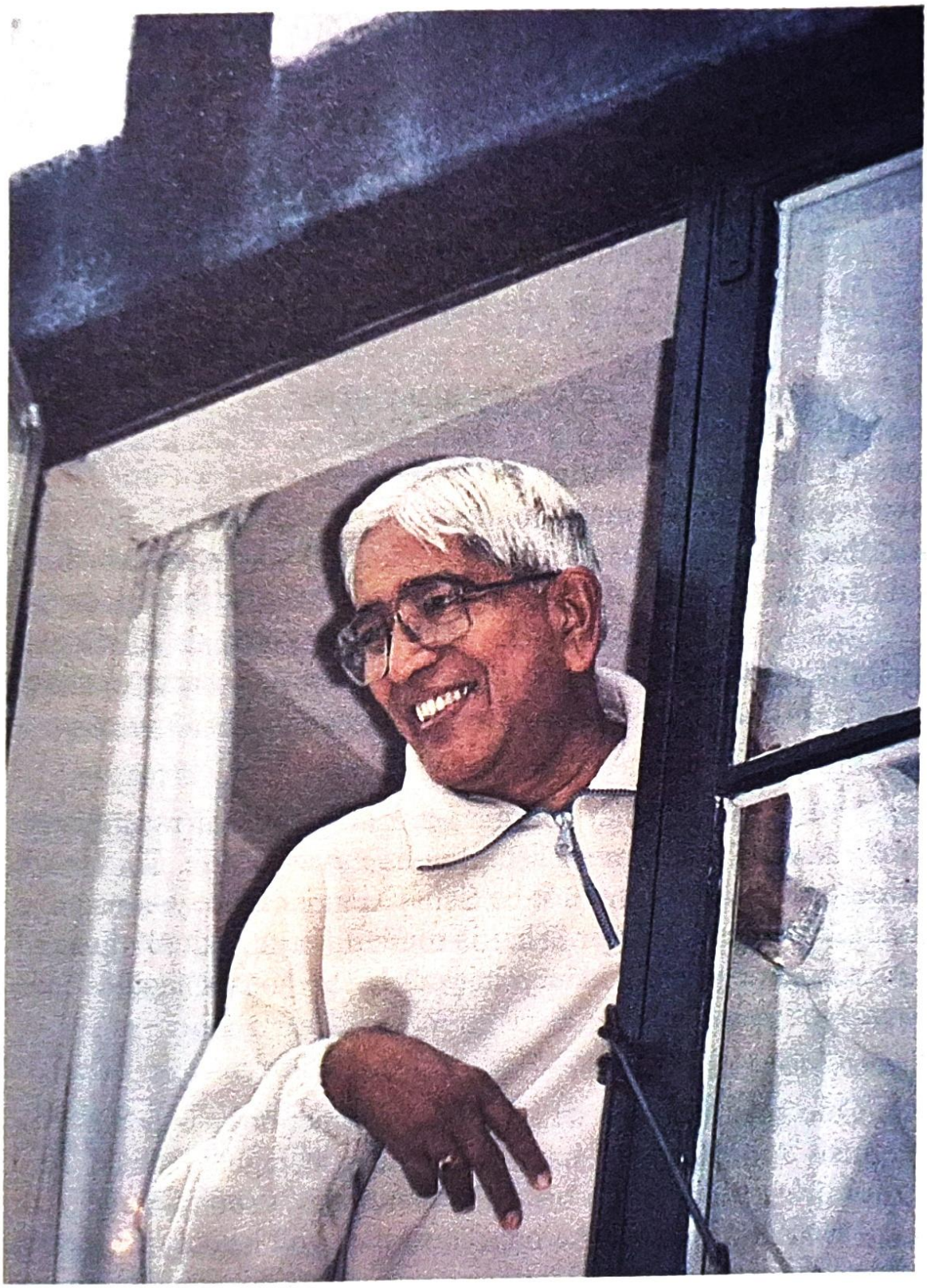
Q: Chariji, are you a Sahaj Margi?

PR: I am not a Sahaj Margi. I am a disciple of my Master. Sahaj Marg is a name. Discipline is a way of life. So, I wish all of you may or may not be Sahaj Margians, but you must be disciples of my Master. That is more difficult. I think those of you who are going to sleep in your hosts' houses should leave now. No?

A: No, no! [laughter]

PR: One host may be willing, but the other hosts may not. No, because morning we have meditation at eight o'clock. And remember, there is no breakfast here. Yes? You all have your breakfast and come. The next meal here will be only tomorrow night.

Good night.



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GIVE TOTALLY, GET TOTALLY

Copenhagen, Denmark
29 August, 1992

In English we say, "Seeing is believing." Yesterday, I had an eye-awakening experience which gave me a bit of a headache, too. Sitting here, I was looking at that building on the opposite side of the street and I was very worried because the angles are all wrong. The horizontal is not horizontal. Now, in my mind, I had this conviction that in Europe everything is perfect, at least in the material plane. So, I must be seeing something which is not there. Really! I had a headache yesterday because of this. Then at night, when I came and sat here, I said, "That building has got me bothered," and then somebody said, "Yes, you are right, because it is not what it is. The horizontal is not horizontal, you see, because the land is sinking." So much for, "Seeing is believing." Don't believe all that you see. Don't believe all that you hear. Now, the sense is telling me correctly, you see, so what made the interpretation which gave me a headache? Myself!

So, what I am trying to suggest is that our sensory apparatus is well designed. I should have believed what I saw and said, "That building is wrong, it is not horizontal." But instead of that, I went by some funny, preconceived notions of perfection in Europe and got a headache for that. So, we have to learn to trust our judgement. And the judgement is given on facts recorded through the senses. When something stinks, it really stinks. There is no use in saying that, "Because this is in Europe it cannot be a stink, it must be a smell. Something is wrong with my nose." This is where the mind plays tricks. It is the mind which plays the tricks, because the senses have seen or apprehended what is there to be apprehended, the brain has recorded it, the soul is looking at that through the medium of the mind, and the mind is saying something is wrong.

That is why in raja yoga we are working with the mind, on the mind. The yoga of the mind. So, I was thinking of this last night. This morning there was a bunch of French abhyasis who want to leave immediately after meditation. I was having a short talk with them and I exchanged some ideas with them, that whenever you give something, you always get more than you give, otherwise you wouldn't give anything. Even in a small thing like buying something in a shop, the price that you pay for it is something less than what you get. It differs from individual to individual, based on our own value systems. But it is implicit in every transaction, that if you did not get more than what you are giving for it, you would not do that transaction. The funny thing, or rather something which is quite paradoxical, is that the shopkeeper must then be receiving less than what he is giving. He's receiving money for selling something. Therefore, you see, money is the smallest of things. But then, why is he selling something for that money? Because with that he hopes to give and get something better than what he has given.

Now, when you want to get, you have to give. Give and take is the law. Not take and give — give and take. So, when you give yourself, you get something better than yourself. If

you give parts of yourself, you only get parts, something better than that part which you gave. In India we say when you give a part of yourself, it is something like prostitution. When a man sells his work, he is getting money in return. Therefore it is never satisfying. However high a salary a man may get, however advanced he may be in his profession, unless he gives something and gets something else out of that, which is why we are not happy with salaries. We want recognition, we want approbation, we want a man to say, "Well done." And that "well done" is often better than the money that you get for it. Good bosses should know this. A pat on the back is worth a hundred thousand francs.

So you see, human behaviour must conform to this, that more than anything else, you have to give sympathy, you have to give approbation, you have to give love. And, when you give totally, you get something much more than what you have given. This is the philosophy of surrender. All the rest is bits and pieces, you know, what they call garage sales in the U.S. — throwing away unwanted things.

So when we do transactions with parts of ourselves, selling our intellect, selling our bodies, selling our sex, selling our beauty, it is demeaning because you know you are getting less than what you have given. Always! Therefore you feel shoddy, you feel miserable, you feel used, you feel cheap, you feel dirty. But when you give yourself and you get something enormously more than what you have given, that is blissful. Therefore the philosophy of giving says, "Give totally or do not give." It also implies that you can only surrender once. There is nothing left to surrender once you have surrendered. "No, no. I surrendered to Sai Baba; now I'm surrendering to you." It cannot be done.

Therefore, in love we must surrender totally, and having surrendered, there's nothing else left to surrender. Therefore the philosophy of one marriage. That is the philosophy of morality, that I don't **sell**, I **give**. Morality is not something

imposed to restrict our freedom, to restrict our pleasure, to restrict our enjoyment. It is a law, that so long as you sell yourself, you are selling yourself cheap. You'll never get something in return that is better than what you have given, because it is piecemeal, it is a sale. You get only money in return. So you see, the law behind morality is something more than just sex or telling the truth or things like that. It is a fundamental law of existence, that what I cannot give totally I should not give at all, because once given, it cannot be taken back. Once lost, it cannot be retrieved.

It is like memory erasure in a computer — "Y/N" You press the 'Y', it's gone! The computer tells you, "Too big to retrieve later, or to undo later." "Y/N" If you press the 'Y' again, it is totally lost. You know, I learnt a lot by using a computer, not science or facts or things like that, but a system of working. The mind is like, for instance, the monitor. It doesn't do anything. It doesn't work, it doesn't think, but it shows. The working part, what you call the processor, is somewhere else — the hardware. The keyboard is like our sensory system, input, output and the man who operates is like the soul. So, my soul is using my body and my senses and my brain very much like a computer. These are hardware for me and the interface, the thing which enables it to work with these things and to see the result of its working, is the mind.

Therefore, in Eastern philosophies we distinguish between the mind and the intellect. The brain can be intact, but if I am not conscious, what happens? It is as if I have no mind. I cannot work without a monitor, even with a 486, or tomorrow it may be a 686.

So you see, a simple thing like the mind is the most important thing, yet it doesn't exist, really speaking. It is not an organ. It cannot be located in space or time. You cannot say, "This is where the mind is." A man has his brain intact but when it functions wrongly, you say his mind has gone. When memory is erased, you say his mind is blank. He has no

memory of the past. Therefore we work, not on the brain, because it is, after all, an instrument, integrated chips or whatever you call them, beautifully programmed to function for us, but if the mind interprets things wrongly, I get all distorted information from a bank of information — the storage, the retrieval is faulty. Therefore, when we take drugs and things like that which change our consciousness, our information retrieval is faulty. The information is right — my interpretation of it is wrong. That is the danger of drugs. That is the danger of anything which alters states of consciousness.

Only with the normal state of consciousness that is given to me as a human being can I appreciate this world and work with it for my evolution. It is all right to quote Huxley and all these great names, and to say that altered states of consciousness show us altered states of reality. Not at all! The reality is the same — it is distorted! So, I don't really believe in altered states of consciousness. I only believe that it is a distortion of reality. It is like a lie is a distortion of the truth. The truth doesn't change. Therefore, we say the truth is eternal, reality is eternal.

If my permanent state of natural consciousness is kept intact, unimpaired, I have a medium through which I can work, using this world to work upon myself. In that sense the world is not there for my enjoyment; it is there for my education. It is something I use to help me to grow and to evolve. Similarly, a computer is not there for my enjoyment. Of course, I too play games sometimes to relax myself or to wonder at, you know, the fascinating possibilities. But that is not reality. A game is never a reality. A game is useful to relax. Relax what? Tensions. Why? Because in a state of tension, again, there is a distortion of reality. Like when a man is angry, he sees something different from what he would see had he not been angry. When he is agitated, he sees things which don't exist. When he is afraid, he sees a snake in a rope on the street.

Therefore, there is no place for emotions in spiritual life, because emotions distort. When we are moved by emotion, by a pretty face, we do things which we should never have done, which we realise later — it is a distortion. What brought about the distortion? There is no use blaming the pretty face. My emotion distorted my vision of reality, my appreciation of reality.

So, there is nothing to be blamed in this universe, either for our growth or for our fall. Nothing to credit outside myself, nothing to debit outside myself. I am responsible. So you see, the onus for both our growth and our fall is upon ourselves. There is nothing outside which can affect me if I retain my pristine consciousness in its pristine state, if I use my hardware correctly, if I allow data to be inputted accurately, without distortion of the mind, therefore having the capacity to use that information perfectly, adequately, appropriately. Without this mechanism, I am lost. Lost means I know neither the truth, nor the lie. I do not know what is right, what is wrong.

When we are lost, we do not know where we are and how to get to where we have to get. I may be able to read the name of the street but that is no use to me, I am still lost. So, in a situation where I am lost, the information that is currently available to me is of no use. So much for knowledge, so much for facts. Therefore, when you telephone a friend, if you have the ability to remember his number, he asks you first, "Where are you speaking from?" "No, no, tell me how to get there, for heaven's sake!" "Yes, but where are you? How to tell you where you are, how to get here unless I know where you are! Because if you are to the right of me you have to walk left, if you are to the left of me you have to walk right. If you are in front of me you are to come back towards me." So you see, to orient ourselves towards the goal, this information is at least necessary in the beginning. After that, having got the instructions to proceed, now I don't need anything else. Three

turns to the right, then one turn to the left, fifth house on the left, it's simple! Anybody can understand.

So, when we go to the Master for the first time, we must go in the consciousness that, "I am lost." Sometimes I even don't know who I am. I have known people coming to Babuji under the effect of drugs, and they are so befuddled that they don't know who they are. They don't know whether they are Danes or Swedes or, I don't know, Eritreans. They are there. But since He is there, now the Master can retrieve the information that is necessary for his use. When you are not there it is not possible. You have to be there at least for the first time in person. Therefore, introduction in spirituality has to be face to face, person to person. Otherwise, he does not know he is receiving, we do not know to whom we are giving. You do not know what to give, how much to give, why to give at all, if at all.

So you see, unless we are able to appreciate this basic law that I cannot get anything without giving, that if I give totally, I get totally, which is much more than what I can give; that having given myself totally once, there is nothing in me which I can give again and therefore, if I pretend that I have given myself to somebody and I'm continuing to give parts of myself to somebody else, whether physically or otherwise, it is a lie. It is cheating! Therefore, I feel ashamed, I feel defiled, I feel lost, I feel guilty that what I have given away doesn't any more belong to me. It is like my buying something in a shop, paying the money, and, when the girl is looking the other way, pocketing the money again. I can go to jail for it. This is law.

What I have given once to someone, I have no right to give again to somebody else. Because, having given something, I have received something which I cannot give back. When I give love, I receive love. Now, love is something I cannot give back. Money I can give back, things I can give back. I cannot give back life. When I am dying and someone gives me some medicine which restores me to life, I

cannot give him anything except gratitude. Can I say, "Here, take back the life that you gave me."? Therefore, these are debts which we can never repay except with love.

Therefore, when we give love and we receive something of extraordinary value, of extraordinary bliss, what can you give more? You can only give something more from yourself. Having given yourself, it is still possible to love, though you don't exist there to love. This is the secret. Many abhyasis ask me, "But I find my love growing, how can you grow in love when you are not there yourself to give any more?" Because love is never given. Only things can be given, facts can be given, but not love. Therefore, it is as if, having given myself away, my love continues to grow in a no place, no time situation. It is as if you have planted a tree and given it to the Master and even after the tree is cut, he is able to still get fruits from that.

This is the secret of love. And this is what we are dealing with in spirituality. This is the sort of love we talk about when we say, "Having given, you cannot give again." This is the sort of morality of which we speak, that having given once to someone, you cannot give it to somebody else again. It is not something you can deal with as if it is a thing to be broken up and divided. A heart is given whole or not at all. It cannot be cut up into pieces, a hundred and two pieces to be distributed to a hundred and two different individuals. It cannot be even given piece by piece to one person and claimed that this is morality, because I've only given it to the same person. It is given once, wholly, or not at all.

We are always talking of love and devotion. Devotion means, to my mind, what? Perfect performance of your duty. We are always confusing devotion and love. But Babuji was very clear in saying, "love and devotion," so they cannot be the same thing. I have tried to tell you what love is — how it can grow. How it has to be given, or not at all. How it has to be given totally because it is not something which you can cut

into pieces. How, having given it once, it can still be there though you are not there. How, when we love in that total sense, the object of our love may be dead but yet the love is there, the beloved is there, the love is flowing towards him or her as the case may be. And how, therefore, we cannot take up a second person to replace the first. This is true morality.

Devotion is duty, you see, perfect duty is devotion. Now, if I am devoted to my Master, it means perfection in the performance of the duty he has given to me, or which I have voluntarily accepted from him, as nearly perfect as possible, growing in perfection. People ask, "How can something grow in perfection?" Well, every agriculturist knows that you have a perfect seed. You prepare a place to plant it as perfectly as you can. You have a perfect sapling, you have a perfect plant, you have a perfect tree, you have the possibility of a perfect fruit. We start with the seed. At each stage it is perfect. It is a growing perfection. It is a changing perfection, yet it is perfection which doesn't change. The object into which that perfection is put or associated with may change, but the perfection by itself doesn't change. Therefore, you can have a perfect diamond, a perfect piece of coal, a perfect seaweed. Anything is perfect. Philosophy says everything is perfect, because the Creator did not make anything imperfect. Now we are dealing with what the Creator felt was a perfect creation. When we blame creation and say, "This is stupid, that is futile, this is ugly," we are criticizing the Creator. No mother likes to be criticized about her baby. You try telling a mother that her baby is stupid or ugly. She is worse than a tigress! So, it is very true. I have tried it very often just for fun, to see the reaction! It is always the same reaction, "How dare you say my baby is this and this and this!" We have a saying in Tamil: "To the crow, its baby is a golden baby." Every mother's child is perfect.

So, if every mother's child is perfect, how can there be imperfect people? So, when you think you are imperfect, you are already starting with a criticism of your creator. "I am

imperfect." 'I' am never imperfect. My actions are imperfect, my thoughts are imperfect, my giving is imperfect, my taking is imperfect. I am imperfect in my thoughts and actions. 'I' am not imperfect. 'I' am never imperfect because 'I' my Master created, my God created. He never created imperfect things.

Therefore, when we clean we are removing these imperfections, and here in Sahaj Marg the perfection also, because the law says, "You cannot get rid of the duality of existence. You cannot remove imperfection and leave perfection behind." You take both or you leave both. Therefore, when we take away all that is in you which is not created by Him, then remains that which He created, which is the Perfect. So, here there is no good, there is no bad, there is only the idea of perfection.

Perfection is neither good nor bad, it is neither big nor small, it is neither tasty nor un-tasty, because these are the opposites on two sides of that which is called the *via media,* which is neither perfect nor imperfect, neither good nor bad, neither beautiful nor ugly, nor tasty nor un-tasty. Therefore we call it, "overcoming the dualities of life." You cannot have a person who is only good; it is not possible. He may be good to someone, but he will be bad to somebody else. He is beautiful to somebody, ugly to somebody else. Somebody likes blondes, somebody likes brunettes. Somebody likes tall, somebody likes short. But what is tall and short? It is a measurement which we make. Tall in relation to someone else, short in relation to someone else. They are relative values. Good and bad are relative values. Beautiful and ugly are relative values. Tasty and untasty are relative values.

I was once taken to a Japanese restaurant. "A very, very Japanese restaurant," as my friend who took me there said. Everybody was enjoying the different varieties of the same seaweed smelling of fish. I was almost nauseated, and I was further nauseated when I heard that dinner had cost him a thousand dollars. Thousand dollars! Now, you see the idea of

what is nice differs. Poor man, he thought he was doing me a favour by taking me to one of these nicely tucked away Japanese paper-maché restaurants with dolls strutting around, with tiny portions of seaweed in different colours, shapes, and sizes — the stink all the same. Now, that is the real value, you see, they stink. But they value that stink. People who eat raw fish, for them that is the ultimate perfume, you see, not Chaňel, not Lanvin and things like that — fish.

So you see, here again it is relative. I once saw a movie in Tamil, where a well-bred girl from a good family falls in love with a fisherman and marries him. They live in a cottage on the seaside, but he, out of consideration for her, throws away all the fish. And she finds he cannot sleep. He is tossing and turning and he is unable to sleep. Being a very wise girl in love with her boy, she brings a basket of fish and puts it under his bed and he is blissfully sleeping. So you see, these are things which we get used to.

Spirituality says, "Don't get used to anything," because becoming accustomed to something is a bondage. "I am used to Copenhagen." You are a slave of Copenhagen. "I am used to this particular place." You are a slave of that place. "I love the mornings." You are a slave of time. There is no getting accustomed to places, persons or things in spirituality. There is only loving persons, places, and things. I can love Copenhagen, but if I get accustomed to Copenhagen to such a state that I cannot leave Copenhagen without a pang in my heart, I am lost.

Therefore, patriotism has no place in spirituality, nationality has no place in spirituality, nationalism has no place in spirituality. Even religion has no place in spirituality, because I am accustomed to Christ, or I am accustomed to Krishna, or I am accustomed to Buddha. "No, no, how can I worship Buddha when I am worshipping Christ?" The question would not arise, you see, if you have really been worshipping and adoring Christ. It is a **principle** that you

adore, not a person. People always tell me, "But Chari, you say you cannot marry twice, so how can I change my master, how can I change my lord?" Because it is not a living thing, you see, it is a principle, and the principle has no name, no form, no content. He was Jesus, he was not the Christ. Through meditation, by leading a life which was appropriate to achieving that state of being called Christhood, he is called Jesus the Christ. So, the Christ is a principle, like Gautama the Buddha. There is no such thing as Buddha, you see. It is a principle, it is a state of being. He achieved that state of being, so he was called Gautama, who had achieved a state of *Bodhisattva*, which is called Buddhahood. He became the Buddha. Like a man mounts the throne and wears the crown and he is the king now, but there is no such thing as a king. He is still Ethelred the Third or Browero the Fourth or Stupid the Fifth. Therefore, when he is thrown out and goes into exile, he is no more the king, he is the ex-king. So, don't make the mistake of thinking that you worship Christ; you cannot worship Christ. Jesus as a person is not worshipable.

So, what are you really worshipping? Nothing. Therefore, you are only aspiring to be something like that which was the Christ, which can again be the Christ, which can in the future come again as the Christ — not as Jesus again, because Jesus came once, no more. Buddha, Gautama came once, no more. Therefore, here also we have the principle, the Master. The Master is a principle. Babuji Maharaj was a person. Now, for those who knew Babuji Maharaj, yes, but for those who have never known Babuji Maharaj, to talk of him is as silly and futile as for people today to talk of the Christ. Do you understand?

So, the person has to be distinguished from his state of being. "I love happiness." How can I love happiness? I can **be** happiness, I cannot **love** happiness. "Oh, my wife, you know, when I married her, she was such a happy person, but today she's always bitter, bitching all the time." Yes. States of being change, except in that one state which is unchangeable, the

changeless condition which is only available in spirituality, not in wives and husbands. Now, if your husband has achieved that state, the changeless state, he is no more your husband. Then, the woman says, "No, no, I have lost my husband." Yes, but he is there.

So you see, we are dealing in a lot of fallacious ideas. Devotion is not understood. Am I doing the duty which I have accepted to the best of my ability? That is devotion. If you are, you are devoted. Have I given myself in my entirety to that which I say I love? Then it is love. Have I only given parts of myself, my thinking, my body, my mind? No. If not, what? Again, I say, I don't like to use the word, it is prostitution because you are selling a piece of yourself for something. Now suppose you are shown a diamond necklace, and after you have paid the price, he cuts off one diamond and gives it to you. "Oh, but Madame, they're all the same, you know, twenty-seven diamonds. Why do you want twenty-seven of them, it is difficult to protect. Take one. It shows everything." Cheating!

So, when we do something partial, pretending it to be the whole, it is a lie! It is cheating. We are lying to ourselves, we are lying to the other person, both are being cheated in the bargain. Therefore, both feel miserable. So, love **and** devotion, the combination must be there. Proper understanding — surrender means giving once, having given once, nothing more to give, no more possibility of surrender. You cannot surrender again and again. "Babuji, I want to surrender to you on the first of January every year." "Aha, it is good. But why?" "Because I make New Year resolutions." He doesn't say, "Do it on every New Year." I make New Year resolutions to give myself. It is like my deciding that, if I meet a beggar, I shall give him a hundred rupees — in Copenhagen, where I am sure that I will not meet a beggar. In India, I dare not make such a resolution.

So, we should not lie to ourselves, we should not sell ourselves. It is only when you sell yourself piecemeal and get less than what you give, that it is immoral. Immorality is not vested per se in any single thing. I have tried to make this distinction, that in the East we are always confusing morality with sexual morality alone. Therefore, we have a lot of chaste people in India who are crooks and scoundrels who cheat you left and right in business, in the shops. They don't think that is morality because for them, morality is only in the sex, nothing else. It is a wrong understanding of morality. Morality is when you sell short, give less than you take — it is immoral always.

So, let us try to have a right understanding by using our heart. Nothing of this is new, nothing of this is original. I have not created what I am speaking to you about, but the understanding that I have got is my original understanding, my own understanding made possible by circumstances, which I have accepted: namely, the need to live a spiritual life. I hope all of you will be able to do it, too.

Thank you.

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SPIRITUALITY UNITES

Vrads Sande, Denmark
6 September, 1992

Dear friends, I am happy to be here with all of you and to talk something about Sahaj Marg, the system of yoga that we practise. Often when I am travelling, especially by road in India, we stop to ask the way. I don't know how many of you have been in India, but the roads are not marked; they have no numbers. We have often to ask which is the way to such and such a place, and then the man says, "In my experience, this is the best way," and he points to a particular way. So, that gave me an insight into some sort of a truth: that we find the way through other people's experiences. Of course, we cannot go through the experiences of everybody. There are millions of people, millions of ways. So, in some way, we have to come to an intuitive understanding of our needs and of the way that we have to follow.

When I first came to Europe, way back I think in 1968, I don't remember exactly, I was amazed to find that the same river had different names in different countries. The Danube I know at least three different names. And of course, there were

all the political problems of which is the right name. If you called it the same name, in one country they understood it, in another country they did not understand it. If you said Dunav instead of Danube, you had to explain yourself. So, how can the same thing be called by different names, causing confusion, causing often differences of opinion, dissension, strife? Then I started the practice of yoga. You will permit me to speak a little about my experiences on the path because that is what validates what I do for myself.

In this system of yoga, my Master has always said that it is **your proof** that is necessary in your practice. If you are practising and if you find what you seek, that is the best proof that the path is right. I started without any guidance from any guru or any teacher or any master. I started from books. I had a Christian education in school. Throughout my school, I had a Protestant education for about eight or nine years. Church attendance was compulsory, Bible reading was compulsory, and I had to pass an examination on the Gospel of St. Mark before I could appear for my Senior Cambridge Examination, as it was then called. That gave me a very good idea of religion.

In fact, if I am not telling any secrets out of class, as we say in English, in my family, especially my younger brother and I, have been profoundly influenced by Christianity: his compassion, his mercy, his love. They were profound influences upon us. My brother was almost converted to Christianity, but then something happened. I started to study in Calcutta, and there I came across the teachings of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. I'm sure some of you here, or many of you here, will be familiar with his name. There I found an enormous body of teaching, almost the parallel of what is taught in the Christian teaching, except that the words used are in different languages, the understanding is different, and we made the mistake of thinking that the God is different.

I used to go to the Ramakrishna Mission in many countries when I had problems and meditate, even though I had not started meditating systematically under my Master. When I was in Europe, I used to go and sit in churches when I had problems, and meditate. And, I have had what, I should say in my own humble way, were revelations about Christianity, about Christ himself. I have had visions of the Buddha. In fact, you know, I have been tempted to Christianity, to Buddhism, to the teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. I was pulled in many directions, but finally I found they were all the same direction and the apparent difference of direction was in my mind and my perception. They all spoke of the same thing.

When Gautama left his family after seeing certain things which he should not have seen — you know, he led a very sheltered life, he was a prince, he was married, he had a baby and he was forbidden to go out — but one day he went out and he saw a dead body being carried for cremation, he saw a sick man, he saw an old man and something else, and he came back profoundly disturbed. He said, "What is this I have seen?" They said, "Yes, all this exists. Man is born to become old. It is possible that he becomes sick. Eventually, everybody dies, so there is nothing to be disturbed about." He said, "No, no, this is not the life that I seek. I seek a life in which there is no birth and death, where there is no sickness, there is no old age." And he left his house, he left the palace, he left his wife, he left his baby, meditated, and attained what is called the Buddhahood. It is wrong to say Gautama was the Buddha. Gautama **attained** Buddhahood. The Buddha is a principle. There have been many Buddhas before him according to the tradition. Gautama was one such.

Then I started to meditate under my Master, and I asked him, "To which religion do you belong?" Because he comes from a place in north India where people are Hindus but look a little like Moslems, as you can see in that picture. He said, "I was born a Hindu, but now I have no religion." I was shocked.

I said, this man is a holy man, a teacher, a master, and he says he has no religion. I said, "Babuji, how can that be possible? You are teaching thousands of people the way of God, the way to God." He said, "It is not only religion which gives God. God gives religion, and we can follow any religion we like into which we are born. You were born a Hindu, somebody is born a Christian, somebody is born a Buddhist, but the God of all religions is the same." That was one of the first things which moved me to accept my Master, because I had known this myself.

When we study the history of human beings on Earth and how much human beings have fought each other and when we realise the truth of that old saying that, "Religion has killed more people than wars," and on what have we been fighting, for what have we been fighting, that my God is greater than your God, and yet we speak of God being one. There cannot be two gods. The infinite can only be one, and then even intelligent people, well-educated people, say, "My god is the only god; your god doesn't exist."

I started studying a bit of Buddhism. I was tempted to be a Buddhist because, again, I found the profound truth that God is within. He too meditated, he too found his final goal, his final emancipation, his *mahaparinirvana*, as they say in the Buddhist religion, under the bodhi tree after forty days of meditation.

Jesus the Christ found his goal by meditation. If tradition is to be accepted, Mohammed the Prophet found his goal also by meditation. Then my Babuji Maharaj, my Master, told me, "Remember, my son, that Buddha was not a Buddhist. What he taught became the Buddhist religion. What he taught was not a religion. What he taught was a way of life, how to live life, how to be human, how to practise the virtues of chastity, austerity, compassion, mercy – love, above all. If you see the teachings of these great prophets of the past, one thing you find, like a thread running through all their

teachings, common to all of them: the need to love. "Love thy neighbour as thyself." *Bhakti* of the Hindus, what Krishna calls love for God, this runs, as we say in the Gita, like the thread which holds the pearls together in a necklace. Often, people have wondered whether it is the pearls which are important or the thread which holds the pearls together in the necklace is important. Well, if the thread were not there, there would be no necklace — the pearls would be scattered all over the floor and we would be hunting for them.

So, when we go into this study without bias, without religious bigotry, without the narrow-mindedness of certain traditions which say, "I am the only god, you are my only disciple, etc.," we find that the teachings of all these great religions of the past, the prophets of the past, **in essence** is the same teaching. So, my Master said, "When you have found this truth, that what they all taught is the same as what my Lalaji Maharaj, my Grand-master taught, why do you have to go hither and thither to seek it? Practise what they did."

You see, if somebody eats ice cream and says it is good, we must eat that ice cream and say it is good, too. It is experience which gives the most profound heights of knowledge and the depths of intuition and wisdom. So, here in this system we meditate to seek that ultimate, infinite principle. You may call it by any name you like. To me, whether you call him Buddha or Christ or Krishna or anything, it doesn't matter, because after all, it is a nameless principle. The names are given by us. God has never announced himself by any name. He said, "I am here. Come to me."

So, when I could find solace, consolation, comfort in a church, having been born a Hindu, I don't see why I shouldn't go to a church when I feel like it. When I have meditated in the meditation halls of the Buddhists and the Ramakrishna Mission and found solace, comfort, succour, help, love most of all, I don't see what is different between the church and between the meditation halls of these people. When I meditate

in our own meditation halls here and I find the same thing, the same truth, the same all-pervasive love, the goodness, the kindness, the compassion, the mercy, to me, now there is no distinction between one religion and another, between one god and another. To me, it is all one, known by different names in different lands, worshipped differently under different traditions. But if the heart is put into that worship, the way of worship does not matter.

We have a saying in Hindi, "Love! That is to say, be loving! It doesn't matter how you show that love." To a child, we bring a toy; to a guru, we carry a gift of what, a fruit, a flower. To the beloved, we may take something that pleases her. It is all an expression of our love. So, in the oriental tradition of taking a gift, it is to find out how to express this love. It need not be expensive, it need not be wrapped up beautifully. It must be able to express my love for him to whom I am carrying something. My Master once told me, "When your dog comes to you wagging its tail, it brings you a bone from the garden. To the dog, the bone is the most precious object. It loves bones." Now if you say, "No, no, I'm a Brahmin, I'm a Hindu, I won't touch a bone," you cannot react with the dog. Accept it, throw it and make the dog fetch it again. And the dog's day is made, your day is made. So you see, all gifts must be gifts of love.

I was profoundly influenced by a story I read long ago, *The Gift of the Magi.* I don't remember who wrote it. It was about a young couple in love, very poor, living in an attic, with an attic window through which they could see the stars. She had lovely, long, golden hair, and she used to see in the shops a pair of combs which she craved for. He had a lovely watch, and he used to see a fob, a golden chain which he wanted for his watch. Christmas was approaching and, between the two of them, they had two and half pennies. They needed thousands of such two and a half pennies to buy the gifts that they each wanted to buy for the other.

On Christmas Eve, they both went that morning to work, came back in the evening, and both were shocked. The girl had cut off her hair and sold it, and she gave her beloved a present. He opened it and found the chain for his watch, the fob. He packed it up nicely and put it away. She said, "Why don't you put it on your watch?" He said, "Darling, we will do it later." She said, "Why not now?" He said, "Because, if you open your package, you'll find out." In the package were the combs she had wanted for her golden hair. He had sold his watch to buy the combs for her, she had sold her hair to buy the chain for his watch. Then they fell into each other's arms, wept together in joy, in love, at the sacrifice that each of them had made.

Love is to be shown by sacrifice. Where love exists, sacrifice must exist, because they are ultimately the same, two sides of the coin. It is no use to say, "I love" and to run away from what you love. Are you able to sacrifice for it? And when you love, it is not any more a sacrifice, it is something that you do very naturally, very spontaneously, like a mother does for her children.

So you see, these are all spiritual principles. My Master's most important teaching to me was his first teaching: "Where religion ends, spirituality begins." His second most important teaching was, religions have served to divide humanity and human beings into different cults, different sects, different religions, warring with each other, hating each other, suspicious of each other. Spirituality unites, because here we worship not a god with a name, we don't subscribe to any principles such as are embodied in a particular text, but we stand by morality, by ethical life, and by the need to love everyone as ourselves, by the need to love, meaning, therefore, to sacrifice. The ultimate sacrifice can be called upon, which Jesus the Christ made, to give his life for those whom he loved.

So spirituality, as my Master said, unites people. There is no more the bigotry of religions. There is no more the separatism of worship. There is no more the problem of which is the true religion, which is the true god — as if there can be a true god and an untrue god. Can there ever be an untrue god? There is one God, everybody knows. Then how can your god, my god, be different? Should we not immediately shake hands and reconcile and say, "Yes, by jove, we have been stupid for three, three and a half centuries, five centuries, ten centuries, we have been saying the truth without putting it into practise: your god and my god are the same; your religion and my religion are the same; your principles and my principles are the same. Except that you, as a European, eat with a fork and knife, I eat with my fingers, the food we eat is the same."

So, spirituality seeks to bring people together in an enormous, transcendental synthesis of oneness of humanity, where human values have to be crystallized by practise of meditation on the heart. What are the human values? I have been talking about them so long — love, compassion, most of all. It is no use praising the founder of our respective religions for having been merciful, compassionate and loving. If I am to be a true Hindu, I must practise the principles of the founder of my religion — love, compassion, and mercy. Anybody who claims to be a true Christian must be able to similarly follow the same principles that Christ enumerated: love, compassion, mercy. If you are a Buddhist, are you practising the same principles? Again love, compassion, mercy. If not, we are betraying our respective religions. We have no right to take even the name of the founder of our religion upon our lips — I think that is the ultimate blasphemy, that without practise, without professing the right values in life, without loving all humanity like the founder of our religion loved, and without sacrificing as he sacrificed, we continue to take His name.

For me, the Bible has been a profound text. As I told you, for about eight years I was a practising Christian — not converted, but practising. It was compulsory. Six months after

I came to my Master, one day in meditation I had the most profound and shaking revelation. It literally shook me to pieces, and it was the vision of Jesus Christ being crucified. I could see the mount in front of me, Christ carrying that enormous cross upon his shoulder, whipped by the Roman soldiers, jeered at by the Jews, the two or three accompanying crosses on which the thieves were being crucified, and Christ crucified and his final cry, *"Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabacthani."* It shook me.

I was so profoundly moved, I was in tears, and Babuji Maharaj asked me, "Why are you weeping today in meditation?" I told him I had a revelation, "Today I saw Jesus Christ being crucified." And he said, "So, you see that you are a Hindu, and you have Christ in your vision, his crucifixion, the most important aspect of his life, the final emancipation of his life. So, why do you have to be a Christian to have a Christian faith, to have a Christian revelation? Have you not seen the Buddha in your vision?" I said, "Yes." "Have you not seen Krishna?" Because, three days earlier on the day of Lord Krishna's birthday, I had a vision of Lord Krishna sitting on a swing, his right arm raised in benediction and blue light flowing from the palm of his right hand into my heart.

So you see, the proof of the pudding is very much in the eating. I have experienced the truths, the very fundamental, life-shaking, emotion-shaking experiences of all these great faiths in my personal experience, meditating without any religion, without any named god, without any systematic, what should I say, worship, because here the worship is to the ultimate divine principle within. All religions have produced mystics. They are called mystics precisely because instead of seeking God outside, they sought God within themselves, in their heart. The mystics know no religion. They were born Christians, but they became mystics. They were born Muslims, but they became mystics called Sufis. They were born Hindus, but became mystics called *rishis,* and they attained what they attained finally, as mystics.

So, this is this important, shall I say, message of spirituality, that **God is one!** Don't make the mistake of thinking your god and my god are different because then we are falling into the error of thinking, like you are a Dane and I am an Indian, you must have a Danish god and I must have a Hindu god. It is crazy! Or, because you are a Christian and I am a Hindu, you have a Christian god and I have a Hindu god. Our one God must unite all of us into one humanity.

We are born Danes, but we must become human beings. We are born Germans, we must become human beings. We are born as women, we must become human beings. Man, woman, Dane, French, Christian, Hindu, Timbuctuan, an African — it doesn't matter where we are born.

We must become human beings in the realisation that, as the children of the one God, we are all brothers and sisters on Earth, bound to help each other. Duty-bound to help each other. Not to give charity and aid to suffering nations, but to help as you would help your own brother in Denmark if he were suffering. Raise him up when he falls, as Christ did who tried to raise up even the dead as Lazarus was raised. Practise the preachings of your particular temple or religion or church, so that the God whom you have been worshipping may be pleased with you and finally one day say, "My son, you are my son in whom I am well pleased."

Thank you.

(Talk given at public meeting.)

30

THE ART OF PERFECT LIVING

Århus, Denmark
8 September, 1992

I think after listening to all that Danish, I'll have to try and remember my English again. I don't know what they have been saying. But it's always a disadvantage to speak after four people when you don't know what they have been saying, because I may repeat the same thing again and again. So, perhaps I should tell you what I did and why I did it.

I have been in this yoga business for about fifty years. I'm sixty-five. I started at the age of fifteen. I really don't know why. I assume that's the case with most of the people who come here — they don't know why they are here. I met my Master only in 1964, about twenty-five years after I started my own yogic practice. He said, "You are not unusual because even in the material world, few people know what they are doing and why they are doing it." It is difficult to accept, perhaps, until you examine your lives.

For instance, I was trained to be a chemist. After training myself to be a chemist, I became a geologist. After that, I became a salesman in a company in India, and I

continued with my sales career, became a marketing manager, became a director of marketing, became the executive director of the company, and then of a whole group of companies. So much so, that when I retired, I wondered why I went to school at all. I need not have studied chemistry, I need not have studied geology, I need not have studied anything.

So you see, often we start off somewhere just because we don't know where to start. Every young man at one age, at a particular age, transiting from youth to adulthood, let us say, finds this confusion. What shall I do now? Should I get a job? Should I continue my education? Should I get married? — if you are in Denmark, for instance. We don't really know. Our parents are not able to help, or are unwilling to help. They say, "Well, you have to decide for yourself." There was a time, especially in my country, when the young people got a great deal of guidance from their parents, from their uncles and aunts, from their grandfathers, in fact from everybody in society. As a young man, when I set out on the road, going out to buy vegetables, for instance, I would be stopped a hundred times by elderly people asking me what I was doing and, "Why are you not doing this?" In India it is very common. You get into a train, they want to know what is your age, what is your name, are you married, is this your wife and what is your salary? In India it is very common. Europeans are very angry and upset when they come for the first time, to have all these intimate questions asked, but they have to answer.

Why I am saying all this is, as we grow up, we realise our personal welfare is not a matter of concern only to myself. It concerns everybody else. It concerns everybody in the family. It concerns everybody in the local society in which I exist and, perhaps in a larger sense, the whole world. We don't recognize this. We don't realise this because we are taught to be self-centred. My existence, my destiny, in my hands. I am the maker of my destiny. All this orientation that is given nowadays, that I am the creator of my destiny.

What happens is, that soon we find out that I have neither a destiny, nor do I have the capacity to create it, because something is working in me inexorably, pushing me in a direction in which I don't want to go. A chemist studying geology? I mean, it was absurd. More absurd going into sales, more absurd continuing in sales, you know, a subject which I came to love because it helped me to meet people, talk to them. I lost my shyness. I found out how much I could do without really knowing anything about what I was selling or what selling is. [laughter] I'm not joking. This was a revelation to me. I came to the very top of my company on a foundation of education which had nothing to do with what I was doing, selling things which I did not want to sell, but enjoying myself all the time and becoming very successful in the process.

When I came to my Guruji, my Master, I asked, "What is this? Is it nonsense? It is a mystery. Is it some sort of arcane thing which I cannot understand?" He said, "You have understood that you cannot understand what you are. You think you are a chemist. You found out you are not a chemist. Studying chemistry doesn't make us a chemist. Therefore you studied geology. There you found you are not a geologist. Then you went into sales. Now there you did not want to be, but you became an excellent salesman. You had a top salary in India."

Therefore, we have to try to find out what we are, what we have to do, by looking inwards. It is no use studying the syllabi and the courses available. Which is the cheapest? Which is the best university? Where should I go? This is what we commonly do. Should I go to the USA and make a lot of money? Should I go to England and study well? Should I go to Germany and become perfect in science and technology? Or, should I remain in India and do business and earn a lot of money? But we are confused. What is it that I really want? Most of us want a combination of everything. You want to be

a scientist and an agriculturist and an operator of a plane. All young people have these fantasies.

What is the reality behind it? "The reality," my Master said when I first met him, "is that we have two lives, two existences — the inner and the outer." All our aspirations, our longings, our idealisms come from inside. All our ambitions for success, for growth, for development, in whatever sphere we are in, come from outside. So, we have to balance our aspiration with our ambition. One is related to my life outside myself, with growth in the material sense, success reflected in possessions, in ownership, in acquisitions, to be balanced with an inner aspiration which longs to be perfect, ideal.

This idealism is very manifest when we are young. All children are idealistic. Until we become eighteen, nineteen, we are so idealistic that we will quarrel with our parents. I remember once telling my father that he was telling a lie and he shouldn't tell a lie, and I got boxed on the ear for it. He said, "Shut up. I'm older than you, I know better." I said, "If you know better, you shouldn't be telling lies." I got hit on the other ear, a second time.

Now, if we are treated like that when we are children, what happens to our idealism? And then we are told that you cannot be successful by living an ideal life, a life of truth, a life of honesty — that nowadays, unless you are a crook, you cannot be successful in business. "Honesty is the best policy." It is only for the books. Truthfulness, chastity, morality, ethics — they're all in books, preferably in libraries, Plato's.

So you see, we have relegated today the art of perfect living as embodied in philosophical, psychological, spiritual literature to beautiful books bound in leather in the libraries, and we are living by artificial standards, artificial values of owning, possessing, exhibiting, and saying, "See how successful I am." But inside of ourselves, we know we are not successful. Any fool can build a palace. What is so great about building a palace, or an empire? Can you take it with you? The

famous question, the most important question we have to answer to ourselves, "What will you take with you when you exit this life?" Therefore, our possessions become something of which we are afraid, "Oh, I will have to leave this behind, this beautiful cassette, this beautiful microphone, my beautiful mansion, my lawns, my dogs, my horses. What will happen to them?" But we don't ask the other question, "What is going to happen to me?" My house will be there, somebody will buy it and live in it. My horses? Somebody will ride. My boat? Somebody will sail. What is going to happen to **me**?

So you see, we spend our life in asking rather ridiculous questions. I know people who have built houses. They need money desperately. They have to sell it, but they cannot sell it because they are so emotionally attached to that house. "Oh, I built it brick by brick." "Yes. Now brick by brick, you are dying, why don't you sell it?" "Yes, but my heart is in this house." "But I thought your heart is here, inside your body?" "No, no, but you are only argumentative." They tell me, "You are argumentative, you don't really understand. If you had a house, you would understand." I said, "Thank heavens I don't have one." Then I asked him a question: "You have one house. You are living in that one house, miserably, unable to live in it happily because you have no money, unable to sell it happily because you are too attached. I have no house, but I am sleeping in a different house every day comfortably. I enjoy the best comfort I could never afford myself. I sleep on mattresses in heated rooms in Denmark, in cooled rooms in America, in natural rooms in India." I said, "Why should I own anything? Do I have to own something to live in it? Do I have to grow the food that I eat? Other people grow, we have to get it."

When we make the mistake of too much concentration on the outer life, the inner life is being relegated to some sort of limbo, "Wait! Your time will come." But it says, "From the beginning I have been asking you, when? when? when? From childhood I have been speaking to you. This is the real life!"

You see, when you observe little children, they have no respect for material things. You buy them a nice toy, they open it, throw it, and break it. A crystal vase for which you paid, I don't know, seven thousand kroner, Royal Copenhagen, is broken because they are using the outside things to reveal something to themselves inside, to learn.

What are we doing? Having learned, we are creating the very things they break, for our pleasure. You see, what a parody of existence. The idealism that was there in my childhood, in my youth, which made me absolutely carefree of material possessions, careless of material things. They had a purpose. When they had fulfilled it, it was enough, "*Basta!* I don't need them any more." But now we are holding onto possessions which we cannot even use, a magnificent Royal Copenhagen horse, hundred and seventeen thousand kroner. I was tempted to buy one last week in Copenhagen. If I had the money, perhaps I would have been a fool to buy it. But I couldn't even ride it. They told me, "You can get a nice Icelandic horse for six thousand kroner."

So you see, we are getting hold of things, first which we need, later on which we don't need, later on which we neither need nor can use, and anguishing over it. Security, you know, this Falck outside. I asked what it was for. "It is a security company to protect what we have." For that protection, we pay. So, I buy something, I need to protect it. I buy protection. Having bought protection, sleeping inside the house, I am always wondering whether this protection will work.

Spirituality says, "Okay, you are born in this world. You have to live. As long as you are in the body, you need to protect it, cover it, keep it in some decent comfort, eat, work. How much? Work enough to earn your living, enough to lead a comfortable life, enough to be moderately healthy, we don't have to be superlative he-men. Then what do we do, I have so much more time? Meditate, because now the inner life is there. It has to begin. You did not do it when it was possible in

your youth. You did not do it when it was possible as an adult. Will you be able to do it as an old man?"

You see, we all do our horse-riding and our walking and all these funny things when we are young because we don't know whether we will be able to do it when we are old. "Oh, but you know, when I get old Chari, I won't be able to ride a horse. Let me ride it now." But what about this inner thing? Will I be able to do it when I am old? Will I be able to sit and meditate? Will I be able to close my eyes, or will I be lying in some hospital bed, waiting for somebody to polish me off, or in an old-age home, miserable, nobody to look after me, thinking only of my misery, meditating only on my misery, therefore becoming more and more miserable? What will I be doing?

So you see, the foundation for our adult life, aged life, old age, has to be laid when it is possible to lay foundations — and that is now, when we are young, when **you** are young. Because, unless we can balance this inner life with the outer life, we are going to be miserable, however much you may think of your wonderful standards of living and your posh houses and cars, etc. It is all a sham, a show. The more a man has to show off his possessions, the less he has inside. This is a psychological truth, it doesn't need to be proved. He who is most insecure here, wants the most security outside. He who is sleepless here, is probably selling sleeping pills to others, because he recognizes the need for it.

So, in everything that we do, in our possessions, in our activities, in our hobbies, we are revealing to the outside world the inadequacies of our inner self. If this is created inside, I don't need anything outside myself. What has a man to do with external possessions who has the wealth of the universe inside himself? What has a man to do with a library when he has the wisdom of the universe here [points to head], or here? [points to heart] I choose to put wisdom here [heart], not here [head], intelligence here [head], wisdom here[heart].

We start with intelligence, we go on to wisdom, we progress to intuition through yogic practice, and finally we have the possibility of direct communication with whatever it is you call God, Source, anything. But we stop with intelligence, "I have a PhD degree; it's enough. I have a nice job which pays me, I don't know, six hundred thousand kroner a year. I have two cars." That is not intelligence, that is possession.

So, intelligence must lead to wisdom, must lead to the capacity to become intuitive, must lead to the capacity for direct communication with the living reality that exists, which you may call by any name you like. Only one method: going inside. Because the communication, the communicator and the one with whom you are communicating are all here [points to heart]. I am communicating with my **Self**, not myself, my **Self**, through myself in the act of meditation.

So, people should know **why** they should meditate. "No, no, it gives you peace of mind." Nonsense! One valium will put me to sleep and help me to wake up tomorrow morning better than today. Of course, if I get addicted to it, it will not help — for some people, a glass of wine, hashish. They will say, "Why meditate?" Because, meditation is the only way to which you cannot get hooked in the sense that you have to take bigger and bigger doses of it. Secondly, it is something which is not external to yourself, because if it is external to yourself, today you may have it, tomorrow may not have it.

Therefore, in our system, we say even the Master, without whom nothing is possible, must be internalized. The outside Master is a fellow who was born, who is living, who will die. What after him? "After me the deluge!" Not at all! What is the way? Put Him here [points to heart]. How? There is only one way. How do you put someone in your heart and say, "My heart, you are my heart, you are my sweet heart." How do you say it? "My love!"

So you see, the way of yoga is nothing but the way of love, sublimated beyond the physical, sublimated beyond the mental, sublimated beyond the intellectual, emotional, to that pristine purity of love where there is no more love of person to person, but love of heart to heart.

The way of yoga is nothing but the way of love. And you cannot have love without giving love. It is something of a mystery to me that in the modern life, more and more people are leading loveless lives. They say, "I want to be loved, but nobody loves me." The first question I am tempted to ask is, "Do you love anybody?" Unless you love, you cannot be loved. How can you be loved just because you are beautiful, or because you are wealthy, or because you are healthy, or because you are a skiing champion? Well, for the moment, yes, like the cricket stars and the tennis stars. They have had so many girlfriends, but they lost the Wimbledon and I suppose they lost ninety percent of their girlfriends to the next winner.

If you cannot love, you cannot get love. For an echo, you have to shout, then the echo comes back. It is a law that, "**Give** and take." We are leading loveless lives precisely because we have lost the capacity to love, in most cases. In the rest of the cases, we are **afraid** to love. Love is a commitment. You cannot just love and throw your lover aside and walk out. That is, first, not love; secondly, if it is love, you are going to suffer all your life.

I see that suffering all around me in society here. People who have left one wife, married a second wife, still pining for the first wife, still thinking of her, still thinking of the injustice that he has done or she has done. Parents and children having problems. Minor problems, you know. A child brings something with love, the parent rejects it, the child feels rejected. It carries the memory of that rejection throughout its life to the grave. That bond is broken, the parental-filial bond. What does it take to remake it? A moment of intimacy. Go to

your father and sit with him and say, "Dad, I'm sorry." And he's waiting, you know. His eyes are flooded with tears, you're both in tears. You hug each other and the moment is made, your future life is made.

It is astonishing that ninety percent of the people I come across, adults, children, everybody, have problems with the parents, or the parents with the children. Of course, problems between couples is almost total. Why? Again, because we are not able to love. We are not able to love completely. We are not able to love totally. We are not able to **give** our heart. We only give part of ourselves. A girl gives her beauty, her youth, what does she get in return? A few moments of companionship, perhaps a few years of companionship. When it is lost, she is lost. A rich man gets companions by the dozen. Suddenly one night he loses his money and next morning he is penniless. Everybody is gone, he is deserted. Where was this love? Was it in his purse? But that is all you will get, if what you are using is only your wealth, or your beauty, or your youth, or your strength, or your ability to play good tennis. These are all physical limitations. When we deal with love, which is not physical, on the basis of physical transactions, physical, you know, manipulations, it is doomed from the beginning. Yoga is important here, too.

You may wonder why I am telling you all this, "Is this fellow a marriage counsellor? He is talking nonsense here." Not at all, because unless your personal life can be happy, contented, stable, you have no chance of making your future a bright future oriented towards a particular goal, which we call the evolutionary goal. If you and your wife are always quarrelling, if you and your children are always quarrelling, if there is strife in the house, how can you, for heaven's sake, ever sit and meditate? Who is to think of meditation? You say, "Meditation! Come on Chari! You must be joking. Let me put my family in order." Yes, but how will you put your family in order unless you meditate and you know the value of what is in your heart, and you know that by giving it, the thing grows

and grows and grows. It is the only thing which grows by giving it away — the more of it you give, the more of it you have. How are you going to realise this?

So, yoga is very necessary, even for the mundane aspects of life. Have I the guts? First of all, I must know what is my heart. Is it just this thing beating, dub, dub, dub, dub, dub, you know, and pumping a couple of litres of blood through my body? Or is it something else? Is it a joke that throughout the human history, people have been described by the heart? He is cold-hearted, he is kind-hearted, he is human-hearted, he is hard-hearted, he is warm-hearted, she is soft-hearted. Why are we always describing a person by the heart? You surely don't mean this muscle under your ribs; you mean something else. What is that heart about which we are speaking? You cannot learn it from books on anatomy. No doctor will be able to teach it. They will do by-pass surgery. What they do in surgery, we are doing in life — we are by-passing the heart altogether, so that every individual today, almost, in the world has spiritual by-pass surgery already done by himself upon himself, so that even though this heart is beating, that real heart is dead.

So, friends, how to bring back this heart? Enliven it, embolden it, make it courageous, make it tell you from inside, "my friend," because after all, we are only friends. The heart was never mine, because something which I can give away doesn't really belong to me. But when I find that give and give and give, you know, it is like a river which is going all the time, but yet the water is flowing in it and yet more water is coming into it. Where from does it come? Now, suppose you put a dam and blocked it; nothing would flow inside. Every person in a house knows this. You have to open two windows to have a draft flow through, it is not enough to open one. And if we say, "This is **my** air, I don't want to let it out!", it will stink. So, our heart stinks. "It is **my** heart, I don't want to give it." I close it, I lock it, it stinks. And what happens when it stinks? We are slowly dying — friendless, loveless, godless.

First, we lose our friends, we lose our lovers, and God will not stay in a place which stinks.

So you see, if the heart is the seat of divinity in the human system, as all religions have proclaimed throughout human history, this must be pure, this must be clean. I am not talking now of physical purity and chastity and things like that, that is all for the body; but the real purity of the heart: that I am capable of acting and using my heart, acting **with** and using my heart. How? In my interaction with human beings, do I use my heart? Am I suspicious, or do I trust everybody? When they come to me with problems, am I sympathetic and compassionate, or do I just say, "Okay, this happens to everybody, go to a hospital." When somebody wants something from me, am I willing to give or am I protecting myself and saying, "No, no, you know, if I start giving like this to every fellow who comes to me, I will have nothing left in a few days." Am I compassionate, am I merciful, am I sympathetic? Most of all, am I understanding? Because, without understanding, you cannot be anything else. Today, we don't understand ourselves; how can you understand anybody else? He who understands himself, understands everybody. One who has not understood himself or herself, can understand nothing.

How to get this understanding? Examine your heart. How to examine your heart? Sit and meditate. What do you do in meditation? Focus your attention on the heart, and then see for yourself the enormously beautiful, wonderful mysteries that are there. And once you look at that, this world becomes meaningless. It is not that we have to run away and become ascetics and celibates, but it loses its charm. Now we continue to live because we have to live, like a tree lives. I don't think a tree finds any charm in its existence; it is there because it is there — reason enough.

So, in that way we begin to live. That I have an allotted span, it is wrong to take my life even with the idea of, shall we

say, evolution, therefore I exist. I exist not for myself. I exist like a tree which gives fruit to others, like a flower which scents its surroundings. So, any master who claims to be one must exist not for himself, but for others. The fruits of his labour upon himself must be handed over to others. They must be allowed to pick it, it is not something for which you pay. Therefore, in spirituality there are no considerations of payment. Can you say a tree gives fruit? A tree **grows** fruit; we pick it. But here, because we are human beings dealing with human beings, we say, "Well, here it is, come and take it."

So, this is the call of spirituality, especially this brand which we are practising called Sahaj Marg, the Natural Way. It is there. Please follow it, accept it, practise it, and see for yourself what it can do.

Thank you.

(Talk given at public meeting.)

31

REFLECT THE DIVINE PRESENCE

Vrads Sande, Denmark
11 September, 1992

Coming to the teenagers — we must look upon life like a river. I have said this so often, you see, I am getting bored about this idea. If life is a river, the river in the beginning is not young, in the middle it is not middle aged, at the end it is not old. It is one river, and the river must start at the beginning. It cannot start somewhere in the middle. Isn't it?

Therefore Lalaji said, "Spiritual practice must begin at conception." Really speaking, when the child is conceived in the mother's body, that is the right moment to begin the transmission. So you see, teenagers are already too late. I should say about fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, and — plus one — twenty! If you look at it that way, when was the right time? It was at the moment of conception, conception to birth is already nine months, then twenty years, you are twenty years and nine months too late, my dear Kasturi! Sixteen years, sorry, eighteen plus nine months. Sixteen plus nine months.

So, this is a funny notion, you see, that the teenagers are something special, that they can do foolish things and not be criticized for it, that they can do stupid things and not be disciplined, that they can run around like wild horses and not be controlled.

These are funny notions, peculiar to the West. Most of the great saints were saints already, in their teens. Those who have studied something about these subjects will know that there have been saints at the age of four, at the age of six, at the age of seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, and in fact, if you didn't become that by teenage, then you waited until you were seventy, because in between, this foolishness of life took over. Because with teenage comes the problem, or we begin to have the problems of life. Therefore, in the old tradition, the spiritual initiation used to be when the boy was seven years old. Spiritual tradition says, start then; because, before the foolishness of life grips them, put them on the right path.

Now, what are we doing? We are waiting till the foolishness has begun, it has ripened, it has matured, it has destroyed itself and it has created several parts. Now we have to collect the broken pieces and put them together again, and put them on the path. You see how much more of a difficult task it is!

So, it is my request to teenagers not to be misled by your parents and the elders who are always talking of teenagers to you. What is wonderful about teenagers? If somebody called me a teenager when I was a teenager, I would have been really insulted. "What teenager?" Because, I find many teenagers are more intelligent than their parents. Most teenagers are more intelligent than their parents. I hesitate to say all teenagers, because there are some more foolish! I hope few of them are here, I mean the foolish teenagers.

It is a well known truth that after the age of five or six, we learn very little. Everything that we need to know in life is learned by the age of twelve years. Boy or girl, it doesn't

matter. After that we are only learning facts, not knowledge. How is carbon dioxide made? How is hydrogen? What is the atomic weight of sulphur? What is the distance between Los Angeles and Copenhagen? Who conquered England in 1066? Norman Conquest. These are only facts. It is not knowledge.

So, subsequent education is an assembly of facts. What for? To help us to do whatever we have to do. This time of life is even before teenage. So, teenage is a time when we should mature, and the bodily maturity must lead to mental maturity, must lead to spiritual maturity. Which, if you have begun rightly at the age of seven or eight, should lead us onto the path without any more problems.

So, this is a very clear thing. Teenagers are not to be excused in future for any stupidities. They are to be corrected, they are to be told, "My dear, you have age as teenage, you are not a teenager. You are a product of a civilization which has lasted, say, ten thousand years." Human civilization, I am not talking now of Danish, Nordic, Viking etc. — that is silly. The human civilization began ten thousand years ago, according to anthropologists, and that is a long enough time for us to have become wise. We are backed by that enormous civilization, and we are the fruit of that civilization. So, we have no business to say, "I have to start like anybody else." We don't start like anybody else. And these teenagers have the benefit of having parents who are abhyasis, many of them are preceptors, so you are already starting on a higher foundation than your parents — if you start. If you don't start, that is your fault, that is your foolishness, that is your stupidity, that is your wasting an opportunity which will not occur again.

So, so much for the teenagers. As far as the Danish group is concerned, my Master was not a fool. You all know that but I would like to say it! [laughter] Because, notwithstanding the fact that the Danish group lapsed into some sort of a coma for the last twenty years, we still have this ashram in Denmark. [applause] This is not your achievement,

it is His achievement. It is Babuji's achievement. That, with such a stupid, silly group, [laughter] which he nevertheless loved very much, this ashram is today a reality in Denmark, means that he sowed the seed nicely. You see, how can the soil stink. Thomas will know, when you put a seed into the soil, the soil can stink, it is wet, it is a lot of, you know, these worms and things like that, but yet the plant comes up nicely. Sometimes we need also this rubbish soil, sort of specialty. And, because something special was to grow here, perhaps the soil was also compounded by him like that.

So, let us not feel guilty about it. We have no right to feel guilty or to be happy. We are what we are. He uses us in the only way he can use us, which is to make his divine plan come true. We have at least produced, I mean, the Danish abhyasis have at least produced a second generation which will come up better than they did. This is very good. I mean it, you know. Very often you find the elder generation good, the second generation worse, the third generation not at all. So, the elder generation of abhyasis, most of you are above forty now, you all started in '70, '71, you cannot be less than forty, most of you. We are now middle-aged. I am old-aged; you are all middle-aged. But remember, the river has no age. So, we cannot claim we are weak. "Oh, Chari, forty years, you know, I'm getting a little rusty in the joints." We have no right to say it. If I cannot say it at sixty-five, you cannot say it at forty, Babuji did not say it at eighty-three. We have a long way to go before we can claim to be tired, to be sick, you know, to be fed up. We have a very long way to go. So, the young have no excuse, the teenagers have no excuse, the middle-aged have no excuse, and the old-aged have no excuse, too.

What have we to do for the future? This is not a Danish ashram. It is an ashram of the Mission. It is an ashram for all of humanity. What you must do is to now make it so wonderful that human beings everywhere must be coming here. As Babuji said, "When the lamp is lit, the insects shall fly towards it." The lamp has been lit. Please maintain it lit.

Don't allow the light to go out. Be careful, put oil when necessary, trim the wick when necessary, put a glass around it when there is a storm. Protect the lamp, protect the light.

Like in the old tradition, you know, when a boy was late coming from school, and it was dark in winter at four o'clock, they put a lamp in the window so that the son could see it and say, "Yes, yes, there is my house." So, this is your job, to make this lamp burn eternally, so that all of humanity will flock here, so we don't have to invite people, they have to come. What is an invitation? A spoken invitation is from the head, the spiritual invitation is from the heart, the divine invitation is by the presence of something which brings people here. That presence we have to retain here. As somebody said, whether he is here or not, we experience it as if he is here. Why as if? He cannot be absent from anywhere. You see, we are somewhere with our bodies, and we are somewhere else.

For instance, there may be somebody here whose mind is in Copenhagen already. "Oh, this Chari, he is not finishing his talk quickly, I have to go," etc. They are not here. But the Master of Masters, you see, his body may be anywhere, but he is everywhere. That is why Babuji said, "If one has the eyes to see, he will see the personality spread out throughout the universe." Not just here or there — throughout the universe. You go anywhere, he must be there. So, his presence is nothing guaranteed or anything promised. It is inevitable, it is natural, it is absolute, and it must be permanent.

Everything natural is not permanent. There is a flower today, it is not there tomorrow. There are the flowers today, tomorrow they are gone. But this must be here as a permanent presence. That presence will attract people from everywhere, make them share in this joy that has been created here, the spiritual joy. Sharing that presence, become something like that presence, progressively — this is our job.

"How to do it?" she asks. There is a nice old story about an emperor who was very fond of art. Perhaps I have said this

before. He wanted to have an art competition, and he invited artists from all over the world. He told his chief minister, "Give each one a large hall, and ask them to adorn the walls, and at the end we will judge and give prizes." So, artists from all over the world came. Each one had a hall. They were all painting, you know, furiously: big brushes, small brushes, oils, watercolours, crayons, everything. The Chinese group came. They partitioned the wall, because somebody was painting there. They said, "We only want some grinding materials." Everybody was surprised, "What will they do with it?" They said, "On the final day when the King judges, then only will we open our studio, not before that." And here next to them was the greatest artistry, beautiful you know, it was as if nature was open to reveal them — trees and birds and all colours, you know, a riot of colours! Art!

On the final day the King came, and he was going from hall to hall. Each one was better than the previous one. The final one, it was so fantastically beautiful, the King almost swooned. He was about to award the prize when the minister said, "Majesty, there is one more you have to judge — the Chinese." He said, "Yes, let me, then." The Chinese opened the curtain, and on this side he saw the most beautiful painting that he had ever seen and he really swooned. When he woke up out of the swoon, he said, "Award the prize to them! How did you manage this?" They said, "Majesty, we did nothing. We polished the wall so beautifully, that it is reflecting this painting." So, polish your wall so beautifully that it reflects the divine presence. You have nothing else to do. We are not going to create.

It's not like a baby, you know, you have to make. "Chari, how do you make a baby?" Nobody has asked me yet, even teenagers. They know all about it. But this is so easy! All that you do is to clean it, make it a mirror, *voilà*! Everything is there, you see.

So, there is no doing, there is only cleaning, cleaning. You are always cleaning your silverware service and your glassware and your beautiful stainless steel, which is so attractive and so very expensive. Do it inside and he that is outside, you will find is actually inside. So you see, you all have a very pleasurable duty and an opportunity for your own development, and to help the rest of the world to participate in this development. I wish you all joy with it.

Thank you.

(Talk given at meeting of Danish abhyasis.)

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LIFE ITSELF IS THE PATH

Vrads Sande, Denmark
12 September, 1992

I said I have many things to say and I don't know where to begin. I was also thinking of something which Babuji Maharaj told me long ago, that, "Often, the things that we don't say are more important than the things that we say." So, it is a question of having to balance the spoken with the unspoken. I have not been able to master that art. I have still to depend on saying things. Maybe a time will come when I won't have to speak so much.

Somebody asked me, "Now we have the ashram, what do we do with it?" I thought it was an obvious thing, you see, when we build a house, we live in it, and when we have an ashram, we also try to live in it as much as we can. An ashram is nothing more than a house where we try to live in accordance with principles to sustain inner growth, inner evolution. People often confuse an ashram with some sort of an arcane environment where there can be no smiling and no laughter, no good food, only cold floors, prickly blankets. That went out with the dodo. We are here neither to suffer nor to

enjoy. We are here to live under circumstances made available to us.

You have all seen Babuji Maharaj very comfortable with his blankets, with his mattresses, with his heated rooms, and even with his mushroom soup. Asceticism is not spirituality. Asceticism is some sort of aberration of the human mind, which thinks it has to suffer to reach God. The opposite is also not true. That a life of license can lead us to God is also not true. A life of license is not a life of freedom. On the contrary, it is a life of bondage where we are unable to break our habits, our way of life, and so many other things. A man who gets drunk and goes on getting drunk is a slave to his drink, he is not free. That is why habits enslave us. As I used to say jokingly to Babuji Maharaj, "I am a slave of good habits. I wake up at five. I can't wake up at seven, you see, unless I am sick." So, I am a slave of a good habit, somebody is a slave of a bad habit, so habits per se enslave us.

Babuji had no habits, except his one habit [chuckles] which he told me himself, of the hookah. He said, "That is my only habit." He didn't say, "bad habit" or "good habit" and that was good, you see, because when everything enslaves us, how can a good habit be good if I am going to be a slave of it? So, there are no things such as good habits and bad habits; there are only habits, and all habits make us slaves. Asceticism is another bad habit, so we should not become slaves. You know, the problem is that we are trying to think under several frames of reference all the time. We are thinking of *hatha yoga*, we are thinking of *laya yoga*, we are thinking of Sahaj Marg, we are thinking of the Brahmin way of life, we are thinking like Vikings, we are thinking like Europeans, and trying to fit everything into this multi-frame reference.

Sahaj Marg says, "Live a sensible balanced life." It does not say, "Live as a European." It does not say, "Live as an Indian." It says, "Live a simple life in tune with nature," and that is common to everybody. Nature is common to

everybody, you see, simplicity is common to everybody. Now, if you want to start defining simplicity — "No, no, you see, I must sleep outside on a rock." Simplicity does not mean suffering. Simplicity does not mean enjoyment. Simplicity means reduction of our needs to the minimum possible. A complex life is one where we need many things. A simple life is where we don't need so many things. We have to try to become simple in our attitudes, simple in our needs, simple in our life and simple in our approach to even our system of practice. This need to make everything complex is, I think, a common human failing, because something complex appears to us grander than something simple.

A mighty machine, very complex, is a reflection or a sign of the enormous technological advance of a society. Lifting up a tiny stone with a crane is an advance. I was watching in Silkeborg some pavements being put in. First there were machines which came and threw sand. This took about a week. Next came some machines which were levelling the sand. That took about another week. The third week some cranes came and delivered beautiful, you know, those jigsaw type of paving stones. All beautifully packed, ready assembled in squares. They were laid exactly, and that crane man was there operating the crane very meticulously, so that it fell exactly in place. So, I saw this pavement which Indian labour would have done in about three days taking three weeks. And then, final proof of the technological brilliance was a crane using a grinding machine to grind the top surface even. You see, this is stupid!

I am not criticizing Western society, please remember that. I am criticizing science and technology, especially the misuse of science and technology. How far can we take this? And then we talk of unemployment, increasing unemployment. If we had let loose thirty Indians who would have been paid on an average fifteen rupees a day, 450 rupees per day, in three days 1,350 rupees (300 kroner). You must have spent there something like 300,000 kroner of your money

in laying that small pavement. So you see, people have to become aware that this is not simple. "No, no, Chari, it is simpler to do with the machine." I disagree.

This has become so absurd that today I had a question from an abhyasi: "What about abhyasis who have heart transplants or maybe, sometime in the future, artificial hearts?" I mean, it was a genuine question from a genuine mind with a doubt in it. So you see, we are going beyond the bounds of Sahaj Marg. Sahaj Marg says, "You have a heart. Meditate on it, thinking that the divine light is in that heart." So, whatever be the heart, we can meditate. Suppose a man has his intestines cut off and a rubber tube put in, which many people have. Are they not eating? Are they not digesting their food? Do we not walk if unfortunately we lose a limb and we have an artificial leg or an artificial hand put in? Unless the whole human being has become a machine, which you call a robot. Then comes the question, can a robot meditate? Till then, I don't see any danger of our having to face such problems in our existence under the Sahaj Marg umbrella.

So, what do we do with this ashram? Live in it, exist happily in it, exist harmoniously in it, remembering that because nobody owns it, it is everybody's. That which is owned by somebody belongs to nobody else. That which has no ownership is everybody's. In the Hindu system of knowledge and philosophy we have this beautiful saying, "He who owns nothing owns everything." Because when you own something you have only something, you cannot lay claim to the rest. Because the moment the idea of ownership comes: "This is my house," then you are barred from entering other houses. They are no more yours.

One thing I liked very much here, you see, that the law prohibits us from putting up fences around our property here. So, when I stand on the top floor of my house — my house! [laughter] — and look outside the back window, I can see, I don't know, one third of Jutland, perhaps, and I feel it is all

ours. Precisely because there are no boundaries. If there had been a fence, however beautifully painted, even if it is of gold, I would only see the boundaries of my property, and say, "Oh, what about the rest of the land, should I buy some more?" Like Tolstoy's story of the man who went around buying land, you see, between sunrise and sunset. Finally the Devil said, "Dig him a grave, six by three by three; that is all he needs."

So you see, when we come down to ownership, the final ownership to which we are entitled or destined, or should I say condemned, is only a grave, six by three by three — in feet, not metres! In metres it would be too big. So, ownership, proprietary rights, condemn us to restrictive thought, restrictive ways of action, restrictive ways of life. We have to get rid of this idea of ownership, that the Danes are in Denmark or that Denmark is for the Danes, Germany is for the Germans, France is for the French. This is all nonsense.

We have to remember that these political divisions were created by human beings. God did not create Denmark. God did not create Germany. God did not create France. God created the world. He peopled it, and said, "Go forth and multiply," if the Christian tradition is to be believed. Go forth and multiply. Multiply what? Not yourselves. He did not mean to breed indiscriminately, produce twenty-eight children. Multiply your Self. This Self that is in me, you see, multiply it, make it grow. Go forth and multiply — that means you cannot stay in this place and grow.

This is the tradition of the *parivrajaka* [mendicant], that among one who is attached to the spiritual life, one who wants to grow, cannot remain in one place because it creates attachment. A *sannyasi* was not supposed to live more than three nights in any place precisely because there are devoted abhyasis coming to give him food, beautiful girls coming to cook, some other beautiful girls coming to sing, and he says, "I have had a nice thing here, you know, let me stay here." Then he falls in love with a girl, marries her and there goes his

sannyasa. So, a sannyasi is not allowed to stay more than three nights, not because any place is good or any place is bad, but attachment robs you of the possibility of development and growth, attachment to a place, attachment to a people, attachment to a thing. We have a right to use places, as we are using this ashram, but not to be attached to it. If somebody makes the mistake of thinking that only in an ashram we can grow spiritually, that is wrong. If somebody thinks that he can grow at home spiritually without ever coming to the ashram, that too is wrong. Everything in its place, in its appropriate time. There is a time when we need to be in the ashram, to be away from the world. "In it, but not of it."

There is another time when, to prevent ourselves from becoming too holy, too moralistic, too self-righteous, we have to go out into the world and see the world as it is, as it is created, as it is beautifully created. See the potential there; see the achievement here, the realisation here. Because without the potential, there can be no achievement. Without raw material, there cannot be the finished product. The raw material is never dirty, it is never ugly, it is never stupid. It is raw material precisely because it is not finished. So, to condemn people, "Oh, he is not an abhyasi, she is not an abhyasi, you know, they are filthy people." Wrong! How are you any better than them? No better! And, if you are better, how did you become better? By His grace.

So, given His grace, everybody can become better, everybody can become noble, everybody can become divinised. To realise this principle of absoluteness of divine possibility, divine work, divine fulfilment, is what makes a real abhyasi an abhyasi. I find too often this tendency of abhyasis to group together and form some sort of an inner circle, sanctimonious circle, and pat each other on the back and say, "Hey, we are abhyasis. Therefore we are something, you know, very clever, very spiritual."

Whenever I hear this sort of talk I am reminded of *The Jungle Book,* where the monkeys come together, you know, the Bandar-log, to feel they are very clever. And why? Because, "We all say so, so it must be true." This is a refrain repeating again and again among the Bandar-log, you know, the monkey people. "We all say so, so it must be true."

Democratic principles have no place in a spiritual organization. We are not better than the others just because we are together. We should not claim betterness. We should claim what? More tolerance, love, more ability to accept the frailties of human existence as we see them, compassion, mercy if necessary. You see, in the Bible I read, "Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord." I used to wonder why God says vengeance is His, because we have no right to have vengeance in our hearts. Why? Because He can have vengeance, He can punish and re-create. He can kill and give life again to what He has destroyed. But we can only destroy, we cannot fulfil. If I kill somebody, he is killed forever. I cannot give him life and say, "Arise, Thomas." That Thomas will not arise.

So, one in whom this capacity to give life again exists — for him there is no life and death, for him there is no killing, because he does not kill. He changes in some way, by transforming that life which was apparently alive into that which is only an apparent death, so that he can re-create something out of that raw material. This is what death does to all of us. Death is an opportunity to renew life in a more positive, more productive, more evolutionary way. Death is not a final, shall we say, full stop to this life, as the Occidental people are generally afraid. They think, "What, after death, I cease to exist!" Nihilism, you see. "If I am not here, what is this life for?" But who said you are not going to be here? It is like every day is a new opportunity, every life is a new opportunity.

So, one who is fed up with this life, who has frustrated himself by not utilizing the opportunities given to him

properly, must sooner expect death, and say, "God, put an end to this life so that I may have the new beginning quicker. Why wait sixty years more in this foolishness, in this stupidity, in this crass ignorance. Terminate my life, my Lord, so that I may begin new, quickly." But when we are wishing for a longer and longer life, what for? See, the only man who has a reasonable, shall we say, right or justification to want to live longer is one who can himself grow and help others to grow.

Babuji Maharaj used to tell me there are only two types of long-lived persons: the sinner and the saint. The sinner, because he is condemned to a long life by virtue of his samskaras, of which he has to undergo the *bhoga*. And the saint, because he has to be here to help those who are thus condemned. It is like a jailer in a jail. He is longer in the jail than any of his prisoners. If he is serving fifty years, he is fifty years in the jail. Others may come, one for two days, one for two months, one for two years, but he is in the jail longest. For the rest, there is an old proverb that, "Those whom the gods love die young."

So you see, we have to totally change our approach to all these problems of life and death, of spirituality and ordinary life. There is no such thing as spirituality and ordinary life. There is only life. In that life, if I have a goal, that life is a spiritual life. It is not spiritual because I practise spirituality. It can become a spiritual life only if I become in myself something approaching the spiritual goal.

No man is good because he appears to be good or practises some good acts. Is he good in himself? If you take away all his actions and yet you find the goodness in him. Because it is the goodness in him which leads to good actions — not the other way around. No man is good because he does good, but a good man does good. A wise man says wise things, but you can even teach a parrot to say some wise things sometimes; it doesn't become a wise parrot. Similarly, no man is bad because he does some bad things sometimes.

So you see, a human being is neither good nor bad, but on occasion he is good, on occasion he is bad, depending upon the way in which his samskaras move him. Remembering that Babuji Maharaj said that samskaras can lie very deep in us, as seeds, until the environment proper to their germination comes. A man who desires not to drink can go around for months without drinking. But one day suddenly he stands in front of a pub, and he says, "Why not just one?" The samskara, the seed is in him, the opportunity for it to germinate has come, and it germinates.

I know many people who are good because they have never had an opportunity of doing bad, or they are afraid of doing bad. I do not believe in a man being a pure man, who is pure because he is afraid of evil. It is like a man who is always in the light because he is afraid of darkness. "No, no, I am always in the light." Yes, but why? Because he is afraid of dark. That is not light, that is not illumination. So, we have to develop this generosity of the maker, of the creator, that I have created nothing good, I have created nothing evil. I have created. What it becomes depends on itself. My help is there for all time, for eternity. They are my children, I want them to come to me.

When Christ says, "Do not prevent them from coming to me," it only means this. "Suffer them to come unto me." That is what he said. Why? Because there are people who obstruct our going towards the goal, towards our destination. They say, "What is this spiritual nonsense? Wait four or five years, wait till you are fifty, wait till you are sixty." It is about them that we have to say, permit them to come. Don't obstruct them. Your time has not come? Well, you are at liberty to follow your way. But those who see the way and see the goal, and see the necessity to go towards that goal — don't obstruct them.

So you see, the first item of good behaviour, shall we say spiritual behaviour, is not to obstruct others from going to the Master, from going to the goal, from developing

themselves, from involving themselves in a spiritual life. Give them their freedom to do it. At the same time, those who don't want to come — no force. Because force never works. Babuji Maharaj said, "If you use force, there is always a reaction." So no reactions. After all, who are we to measure the path, or how long it is going to take, or when somebody will come on the road?

I have been travelling in Europe by cars, fast cars driven by fast drivers on fast roads, autobahns. Sometimes we expect the roads to be choked with traffic and there is nobody. On other days we say, "Oh, today there won't be any traffic. We shall go there in three hours" — the roads are blocked. Such a small thing, we cannot give a prognosis, you see, we cannot say what will be the truth when we go there. In spirituality there is no early starter coming to the early end or to the early goal. Early start does not mean early end. On the contrary, a man who starts just when we are reaching the goal may still manage to reach the goal before us. I have seen this happening again and again. Here, progress is not to be measured in terms of time or years, or when a man begins or when he ends. Because, without knowing it, without understanding it, everyone is already on the path. There is no such thing as coming onto the path. Life itself is the path.

It is like a boat on a river. One boat goes a little to the left, a little to the right, you know badly, shall we say, guided, but the other boat goes straight, but both are in the same river. One fellow may even turn around because he is not yet able to operate his boat properly, he doesn't know how to fix the sails. He doesn't know how to row, he doesn't know how to handle the tiller. And he goes round and round, you see, and people are laughing at him, but he's learning. And beware, he may suddenly learn so much because he has made so many mistakes and understood how to handle so many adverse circumstances, that he may reach ahead of the supercilious do-gooders who left long before him. Given a bad current, the good sailor, as he thinks himself to be, who has never faced a

frustration or an obstacle, he is lost. He'll probably sink. The fellow who has rammed into every boat, crashed into every obstruction, drowned himself twenty-five times — he is the expert.

So, this charity of view that everybody is on the path, everybody is learning, from good as much as from bad; or to put it the other way, as much from bad as from good, we should understand. Therefore Babuji said, "Don't distinguish between abhyasis and non-abhyasis." Who are we to distinguish? **He** has to distinguish, not **we**. So, we cannot distinguish between Italians and Armenians and Romanians and Russians. Who are we to distinguish when he does not distinguish? "Oh, I don't like Italian abhyasis, they eat spaghetti." The Italian says, "I don't like Germans because they eat too much sausage." Who are we to like or dislike?

The tiger eats by killing, the cow eats by grazing. So, is the tiger a better or worse object than the cow? God made it a tiger, God made this a cow. They are living in their respective ways. Who are we to judge which is better, which is worse? We can use both of them intelligently — try to emulate the courage of the tiger, try to emulate, as in Hinduism, the generosity of the cow in giving milk. We are here to learn how to take out the best from every aspect of life. Not to look at the worst, but to look at the best. Then we shall have a positive approach, a properly oriented approach in which we can really help others.

If you are only going to see the sickness, the dirtiness, the ugliness, we are only fit to be sweepers. One who sees dirt everywhere, ugliness everywhere, filth everywhere, I would give him a broom and say, "Sweep that dirt, clean it. That's all you are fit for, because you don't see anything else." It is said of the pig, which is the only animal that cannot look up, "It's always looking down." *Cochon,* and it's a fact.

So you see, our grandness, our grandeur, if we possess it, must be in seeing the grandeur of others. It is too easy to

look at a beautiful painting and say, "Aha, but here there is a mistake." It is easy to listen to a beautiful serenade and say, "Here the note was wrong." It is easy to eat and say, "Oh, today the spaghetti is not really cooked properly." It is too easy to criticize. Every fool can criticize. I think only fools criticize. Wise men don't criticize. Why? Because being wise, it is their business to get the diamonds from the soil, the pearls from the ocean bed, not to look at the vastness of the ocean and say, "It is all filth, it is all mud, it is ooze. What is the use of this ocean, my Lord?" And the Lord says, "Look, there are pearls here and there."

Why do we need the sky? So that we can see the stars. If there were no sky how would there be stars? So you see, we need a background. As long as we are in this material world, evil is the background to good. We always see something by comparison with something else. Any sense of values is a sense of comparative assessment. He does not compare. He says, "Come to me as you are." "No, no, I am too sick." "How do you know you are too sick? Do you think you cannot be sicker? Don't judge! You are too sick in your judgement. I have seen the ultimate sickness. You are nowhere near it. Come!" "No, no, I am too wise, I don't accept God." "Aha, too wise to accept God, too intellectual. Come, I will show you how to see God without your intellect." He says, "Come! Everyone!" He does not distinguish. Can a doctor say, "Only healthy people should come to me."? Suppose Poul Juul should say, "I take only healthy patients." I mean, people would laugh. "So what are you? Are you a doctor or some sort of a saint?" Because they think a saint is also taking only pure people. The contrary is the truth. We don't need saints here.

If Babuji is to be believed and if his goal was correctly understood by us, we are here to make saints. So, saints don't come to us, like a healthy weight-lifter doesn't go to Poul. Please remember that in this satsangh, don't look for saints, because they are in the process of becoming saints. If you want to see the saints go to the dispatch end of the factory,

where the products are packed ready for dispatch, if you can get there. At the raw material end you will only see raw material, timber cut and felled from the forests, waiting to be trimmed, waiting to be de-barked so that they can go through the sawmill, become furniture and then dispatched as beautiful Danish, Finnish, Norwegian furniture all over the world. Only at the dispatch end you can see saints, not at the receiving end of the factory. We are all at the receiving end.

Now like a river, you see, I am always going to this idea of the river, it is a funny thing that most rivers end in marshes at the very destination, the goal where they should be at the sea — beautiful grand river flowing into the sea, mighty ocean. Why? Because at that point they start diversifying their activities, distributaries we call them in geography. Tributaries add to the river, distributaries remove from the river, and finally we have only some weak runlets, what do you call them, rivulets of water, no force, no volume in them, hundreds of them where there was one river before and there's a marsh. And what happens to that? The water is lost, you don't even know where it is. The river, where is that wonderful river? It is in these swamps and marshes.

So you see, when on our march many things contribute to our growth: the wisdom of some, the foolishness of others, the wealth of some, the poverty of others, the beauty of some, the ugliness of others, the generosity of some, the avariciousness of others. We learn from everything. How to be this, how not to be this — both teach us. So, true life tributaries are necessary. We learn from everything that adds to our growth.

But if at the end of the journey, we are going to be foolish like some of these rivers, and now indulge in distributing ourselves into various schemes and operations and hobbies, habits, we create the marsh for ourselves. That is the tragedy. At that point we find there is no more river, there are only weak rivulets of water flowing into no one knows where

— reeds, weeds, marshy sand; if you step into it you will sink. Such a person becomes a danger to the rest of society. So you see, we have to maintain this potential, this volume, its enormous strength to proceed onwards, because by accretion, everything becomes stronger. But if we allow ourselves to be weak and alter that, that will be our personal tragedy for each one of us.

Now, we have the Master, the Mission, the method. I used to assume it is the same for everybody. But I discovered, you know, this morning, that the Master has a Master, a Mission, and a method. Obviously he has his Master, and the Mission and the method are there for him to use for the good of humanity, for development, for spiritual evolution. The preceptors are also talking of the Master, the Mission, and the method. What do they mean by it? Do they mean the same thing? They cannot obviously be the same thing, because they too have masters. And the Mission is in a sense not theirs, is in a sense theirs, because that which you use is yours, that which you don't use is not yours.

A house in which I don't live — I may own it, but it is not my house. People who are very rich and who have many houses know this. They go there for three days, Biarritz three days, you know, south of France for three days, Timbuktu for six days. They have houses everywhere, but no house is theirs. Because I cannot say, "This is mine," unless I'm using it for my use.

Now, are they using the Mission properly — the preceptors? Are they using it for the purpose for which the Master gave the Mission, namely for the welfare of the abhyasis, spiritual welfare of the abhyasis? They have to answer, each one for themselves. The method, is it theirs? No! It is the Master's. Again, if they are using it as directed, it is theirs.

So you see, for the Master, the Master, Mission and method are absolutely his. No question. For the preceptor, all

three become *comme si, comme ça,* [maybe yes, maybe no] depending on how much he means by saying, "my Master" — is he sincere about it? Does it come from his heart, or is it only a concept? Is it his Mission? Can a preceptor say, "my Mission?" Because if he is utilizing it, is he utilizing it for the purpose for which the Master gave him the Mission? If not, it is not his Mission. My method? Same story.

So, what is sauce for the Master is not sauce for the preceptors. They have to judge, each one of them, by touching their heart and saying, "Is this my Master, in the sense that I have accepted my Master as my Master?" I have no doubt about it. I am totally dedicated to his purpose. I am devoted to him. I love him and none else. Is it my Mission? Have I a right to say it? Am I utilizing it for myself and for the abhyasis entrusted to me, as he would have used it? Then it is my Mission. If not, sorry, no! Can I say of it, that it is my method, am I using it with that graceful finesse of the Master, for their welfare and for my welfare and my personal sadhana? Yes, if not, no! So, my Master, my Mission, my method are not automatic. They are automatic only for the Master. For the preceptors, they have to answer these questions, put to themselves, by themselves.

What about the abhyasis? The same questions — my Master, my Mission, my method. Yes. What is applicable to the preceptor is even more applicable to the abhyasi. But they have a certain, shall we say, flexibility. The Master says, "They are abhyasis," there is flexibility. Because, a preceptor is committed. He has committed himself or herself to serve the Master. It was a commitment not under compulsion, but in all cases voluntarily accepted. In fact, many have been wanting to become preceptors for years. If that is a voluntarily accepted commitment to service of the Master, his commitment to my Master, my Mission, my method, becomes total. He cannot say, "No, no. I thought, you know..." Well, then there is only one way, you see, severing the connection.

Now abhyasis are abhyasis — they come and go, until they become so committed, that from mere abhyasis they become disciples of the Master. That is why Babuji never used the word "disciple." He said "associates." Because, every one of us is an associate of the Master, because we are associating with him. We are with him at the same table, in the same bedroom, in the same dining room, in the same Mission, in the same car, in the same train, in the same plane, and on and on and on. People tell me even today, "Oh, you know, I travelled with Babuji from Kuala Lumpur to Madras." Yes, I was there. So, what do you want me to do? "No, no, I know him very well." Wonderful, next. What have you done with that knowledge of the Master?

We are always praising Babuji, "He was so wonderful, he was so nice, he was so humble, he was so generous, he was so charitable, he forgave us our mistakes." How many people are we willing to forgive them their mistakes? He transmitted to saints and sinners. Are we prepared to transmit to saints and sinners, or are we discriminating that this is a bad abhyasi, this is a good abhyasi? He never judged. Are we following him, or are we judging ourselves?

So you see, it is not useful to have known the Master very well if we are not going to use that knowledge properly in our life. It is like any knowledge. I know geology very well, but what is the use? I am preaching. I am a geologist — I am not making a joke! It used to be my first love. But it was relegated to some, you know, recesses of my mind. Even today, when I see some section of rocks and this and that, I feel a yearning. I should have gone there with my hammer and my chisel, and drill for oil and gold. I would have been better than here, you see, judging by results. My results would have been more productive there than here. There is no resistance. It does not resist being powdered in a mill, and then, you know, melted in a cupola, to be melted. It does not resist. On the contrary, drop by drop, it flows, like when you see rain water on a pane of glass. How each drop slowly comes down,

merges with another drop, becomes faster, merges into three more drops and then it is a stream. Human beings mix and they create problems. Put two human beings together and you have a dissension. Put ten together, you have a strife. Put hundred together, you have a war. But put water and water together, you have bigger water. Put mercury and mercury together, you have bigger mercury.

You see, nature is so magnificently responsive to the need for coming together and growing — growth of crystals, growth of a tree from a single seed. But here, accretion provides or produces dissension, strife, squabbles. Why? Because we judge! Simple fact. "No, no, I don't want to sit with this guy." "No, no, she is Italian." "No, no, that guy is a crazy Indian. Talks nonsense — Hinduism." Prejudice!

Prejudice is the enemy of human integration. One single enemy is all that we have. But, like Ravana in the *Ramayana,* it has many heads — colour prejudice, race prejudice, sex prejudice, taste prejudice, habits prejudice. "No, no, they eat with their fingers!" But the Hindu thinks, "You are stupid, you know, when God gave you fingers to eat with, you are using forks and knives and pretending they are purer."

So you see, this is all prejudice — he is prejudiced about your ways, you are prejudiced about his ways, we are all prejudiced about all our ways — commonly, mutually. And being very happy about it, thinking we are wise — "We know." The knower is always a fool. And *per contra*, what Babuji said, "The fool is the ultimate knower. He knows everything." Why? Because without knowing, knowledge comes to him. For the knower, knowledge comes through knowing, through acquisition of facts, through study. Cut off his head and he is dead. The fool, in his blissful state of ignorance, he says, "What I need will come." And it comes.

Babuji never had degrees. As he himself said, he was not educated beyond the sixth or the seventh class of school. It is in his own writings. Yet we have seen him dealing with the

modern equivalences of Einstein. He was never at a loss and he never lost, because he had nothing to gain. When we have something to gain, we have a great deal to lose! When we have nothing to gain, we have nothing to lose. In Sahaj Marg we don't come for gain. People ask, "What is the benefit of doing Sahaj Marg?" If that is the question they come with, then they are conscious that they have a great deal to lose if they don't gain. But if they come because it is the right thing to do, that it is right to grow, it is natural to grow, that all that we are now doing is against growth and not for growth, what is the problem?

So you see, we have to educate people into right thinking. Sahaj Marg is not to give any benefits. It is to make us grow into that harmonious, unitary existence called "divinised existence." Is it difficult? No, it is as easy as floating down a river. The river takes you there. All you have to do is to be in the river and to float! Then what is all this blah-blah of sadhana, etc.? Well, it is fun, it is a game. It is nice to sit and meditate. We feel beautiful things in meditation. We feel blissful. We lose consciousness of ourselves. We see the foretaste of that which we have to become. It is like when I go into my dining room, I take an olive and put it in my mouth — I am happy. So, do you like olives? No, but I am tasting the lunch that is going to come after that. I am not tasting a single olive, I am tasting the whole lunch in that single olive. It is a promise of everything else that is to come.

Similarly, the states that we experience in our meditation are the light before dawn. The sun is to rise. "Look!" "Yes, but I don't see the sun." "You will." "How do you know?" Look at that colour on the horizon. The horizon is beautiful before sunrise, after sunrise it is not beautiful. The horizon is beautiful at sunset, after sunset it is not beautiful. So, when things are rising, they are beautiful. But we expect beauty after we have become saints.

Babuji Maharaj said, "A saint is for the world's enjoyment, not for his own." Precisely because, like the sunset or the sunrise, the sun is there to give us energy, to give us life energy. It is not there for beauty. Beauty is an aspect which is not of the sun, really speaking. At that moment, due to so many factors which science has spoken about, passes the sun's rays, passing at the maximum of the earth's atmosphere. All this bizarre thing of being broken up into its colours, the clouds interfering, the atmosphere interfering, the dust interfering, and we have these beautiful sunsets and sunrises. And we say, "Beautiful sun." No. The sun is not beautiful. "Beautiful Babuji?" As we saw him. Some of us liked these old people with no teeth, always smiling, prepared to forgive a fault, and we said, "Babuji was a great guy. You know, he never said something to me, Chari, about my habits." Yes, because at his age perhaps he thought, you know, "Why should I waste time? If I tell this fellow, he is not going to obey. If I show him the way, he is not going to follow. Let me take the blighter with me, you see, catch hold of him." And he caught hold of us with his shyness, with his toothless smile, with his inarticulate words, with his un-understandable logic. But there are also other ways of similarly enticing.

So, we should not mistake an apparent weakness for real weakness, or an apparent strength for real strength, because Babuji had neither. He was neither strong nor weak. We should not be attracted by an apparent show of ignorance. "No, no, you see, I am telling you, I know nothing." But it was the truth. He knew nothing, in the sense of he knew what nothing is! None of us know what nothing is. He told us the truth — we thought he was being very humble — and said, "I know nothing." And we said, "What a great guy! The Master of the universe saying he knows nothing. See, how humble can you get?" And he said, "I am telling you, with one..., I can spin the universe like a top." You saw how great. This simple guy who says he has no strength, no education, knows nothing, he can yet spin the universe like a top. Wunderbar!

But the universe is spinning! And somebody has made it spin. And we say, "Babuji, can you do it for me?" He says, "Uh-huh, if Lalaji permits."

So you see, that man was teasing us all the time. Teasing us to entice us, like you show a child a toy and the child slowly comes nearer and nearer, and then you catch hold of the child. It may have the toy, but you have the child. You understand? So, these are techniques to be used appropriately, at the appropriate time, by the appropriate person, on the appropriate person. They differ from time to time, moment to moment. Let us not be fooled — the sun is not beautiful, Babuji was neither wise nor foolish, was neither strong nor weak, he was neither human nor divine; he was that from which everything comes.

For me, he was the source. Now, whether to call "source" God or not, that is up to your imagination. I don't think God is the source, because Babuji Maharaj jokingly said, "Even God needs space, therefore space must have been created before God." Now, this is very absurd, you see. If you look at it theologically, from the point of view of religious faith, it is totally absurd. God needing space? What space? Why space? Which space? But Babuji Maharaj said it. You see, now we have to think what he meant by that. What space does God need? Obviously, the space in my heart! We are all thinking of some vastness of space, some universality of space, a whole universe in which He can manifest himself, but that guy manifests himself most in the human heart. It is through the human being that the Divine is manifest. It is through the human being that the Divine works.

Therefore the need for Masters, therefore the need for abhyasis, good and bad. Therefore the need for a Mission, for a Master, for a method. And if the human being does not allow this space which God seems to need again and again? He is not a fellow who needs space once and for all, He needs space again and again. Because He is, and He is not. From when He

is not, He wants to become He is — He needs space. I provide the space, you provide the space, you provide the space. Having provided the space, if we have done it, the trap closes! It is a beautiful trap.

Even our postman in the village had guests during our seminar, and he was very happy, he made some money. He also probably learned something from them, because I heard that during this stay, he stopped drinking. Some benefit! Even a postman in a village is able to make some money, give up his drinking for a few days at least, stops beating his wife at least for a few days, because there are some persons there who are wedded to a higher life. Why? Because they have given space to Him who must occupy it.

So you see, when Babuji said God needs space to occupy, we should not confuse the absolute God with the personal God. My God is here [points to heart]. God may be anywhere. My God is here. And who is this "My God"? He is the man, or the person, or the principle, or the spirit, which has the capacity to penetrate into my heart, take over, and guide my light. And that is the Master.

So you see, some of these few things I thought, I have been wanting to speak for the last few days. I am getting more and more reluctant to speak, but at the same time this was as if, you know, I had to throw it out. Maybe a personal cleaning was required for me, that I get rid of so many things from me, because I don't need these concepts any more. For a person who has faith, knowledge is unnecessary. Where knowledge is needed, there is no faith. I don't need any knowledge. I don't need anything, because he is here, and I am happy with him. I thought, first, that he was the tenant and I am the landlord, but now I know he is the landlord and I am the tenant, which makes me even happier, because I don't even have to look after the house. It is his problem.

I hope that all of you will realise the absolute beauty of such a situation, the absolute freedom of being in such a

situation. Unless you are in it, you will not experience it, you will not know what I am talking about. I pray that it may happen very soon for all of you.

Thank you.

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LOVE AND DEATH

Vrads Sande, Denmark
16 September, 1992

We have been speaking about love and death, and some abhyasis have also wondered how morbid I can become by trying to link such apparently opposed subjects as love and death. Some have even expressed anger. "How can you talk of two things in the same breath?" I would like to, perhaps, conclude this seminar by this final effort at trying to explain how they are not only related, but absolutely related. How there must be discipline in life, as well as in death. And that discipline is called love.

Today, when I was thinking of the marriage of Dorina and Jens, so many thoughts came into my mind. Nowadays, we have this formality of a civil marriage. Going before a registrar, and signing on a sheet of paper and saying, "The registrar married us." He doesn't marry anybody. He only records a fact, that two people have chosen to get married. Many people still don't want a civil marriage. Nowadays, we are made to accept it because of legal compulsions. It is not really a marriage — it is something that two people decide to

do, and they go to the registrar and say, "We would like to exchange rings in front of you, we want to get married in your presence." And he says, "Okay." You find two witnesses, anybody off the streets would do. So, you put on the rings, grin at each other, sign the paper, get it witnessed, and somehow go out feeling, you know, that the whole thing has been a farce.

You must ask yourself this question: why people want to be married in our satsangh? I insist that they get their marriage registered later by civil authority, because it is a legal requirement. But, why do they wish to get married here? Even for couples who have been married already, they come to me and say, "I would like to be married again, in the spiritual way." The difference is the idea of holiness. One is a very profane type of marriage. Here it is a holy marriage. This idea of holiness is something I would like to talk about, because it is a feeling, it is a spirit, it is an attitude we should cultivate.

For instance, when the *prasad* is put on the ground — you may say, "Well, there are wonderful carpets here, it is not like an Indian house, where there is dust, and water, and ugliness on the ground." Perhaps it has nothing to do with cleanliness. In Europe even toilets are clean. That doesn't mean you can just close the bowl of the toilet and put the prasad on top of that. What is it that makes the prasad not to be put there? It is the idea of holiness. There is something holy in it, which must not be profaned by subjecting it to the indignities of lower values. I don't think anybody would put a bowl of soup on a closed bowl of the toilet. It is clean. Would you put your soup on it while you brush your teeth, and then eat it there? If not, why the prasad?

So you see, this idea of holiness — that there are certain things which are holy, that there are certain places which are holy, people who are holy — we have to bring back into our everyday life and not just reserve them for our churches and our temples, and for special occasions. What is holy is always

holy. What is profane is always profane. When I go to Paris and see this church — what they call this, Church of the Sacred Heart, the *Sacre Coeur.* What is sacred about that heart? And what is not sacred about your hearts? It is the profanity and the holiness that is the difference. One heart is full of love, of divine grace, of divine sentiments, always thinking of the others and not of itself. The other is full of vice, mushy sentiment, selfishness, seeking for itself — therefore it is a profane heart.

In marriage, most of all we should try to re-inculcate this principle of holiness. That is why it is called, in the language of the church, holy matrimony. It must be made holy. The partners to the marriage must understand, must accept, must feel that this is a holy alliance of two people. Marriage is not something just legalizing two people going to bed together. That is the modern idea. In fact, the modern idea is that you do it, I mean, you do the marriage, after you have done everything else! That is putting the, what shall I say, cart before the horse!

If there is a holy feeling about love, it cannot be profanized until that holiness has become an established fact between two people. And, in that holy atmosphere, they involve themselves in matrimonial life, in all its aspects. Then, in that holy spirit, whatever is done is holy. The fruits of those actions are holy. After all, if a mere prasad, which you take and eat, can transform your inner self, what is it in that prasad, which is just a bag of raisins, or some sweets, or chocolates, what is it in the raisin that makes it now a prasad which, if you have really understood its significance, you will not throw on the floor, which you'll not trample upon? There is something. We have to bring that something into our lives. And, when we bring that something into our lives, it takes over, we cease to exist, and therefore there is death. I don't mean physical death, mortal death. I mean death in the real sense — that the person ceases to exist for himself.

This must be an established fact in marriage. The husband's sole concern must be his wife — not himself. He must be giving, not receiving. The wife's sole concern must be her husband. She must be giving all the time, not receiving. Now imagine the magnificence of such a union, where each is only concerned with giving himself and herself — totally! What bliss can result out of such a marriage! Whereas, if each one is intent only on taking, what a misery that marriage becomes — what a sham. It is always a truth, that you can never take more than what somebody will give. You have only to think of any situation you like. Nobody can take from another, more than what the other person is willing to give. And, if the other person is not willing to give anything, you get nothing — even in marriage. When you are thinking only of yourself, and taking and taking and taking, the more of this attitude comes into play in your inter-relationship, the less you get. Whereas, if you are thinking all the time of giving and giving and giving — the more you give, the more you get. This is the idea of holiness.

Babuji Maharaj used to say, "I am here — loot me!" But it was not possible. Nobody can loot anybody else. Babuji Maharaj said, "I am willing to give everything I have, and much more, but there is nobody fit to receive it." Now, one of the failings in abhyasis was that they went to him without this idea of holiness. "Hey Master! Hey Babuji! Hey Ram Chandra!" You see, there must be a certain respect for a person from whom you are going to get so much, that you cannot even count it, account it. You cannot even know what you have got. After all, in a relationship of love, what is it that you have got which makes you so happy? It is the love of the other. If Babuji yet gave and gave and gave, it was because his life was dedicated to giving and giving and giving. For him, there was no consideration of how he was to be treated, what attitude the abhyasis had to accept. He tried to teach.

I think the prasad is essentially an institution to teach us the difference between raisins and prasad. But how many of

us, over these twenty-five years, have understood this difference, have recognized this difference, have felt this difference? How many of us still munch away at the raisins, thinking they are raisins? I think a majority still do. Fortunately, there are a few who appreciate that there is something behind this — there is something in it, which for me is an agency of transformation.

So similarly, when there is love between two persons, whether husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter, friends, guru and disciple — if this real love is there between the two, there will automatically develop a mutual respect, a mutual regard, even a mutual admiration, perhaps, even a mutual worship. Because friendship must ripen into love, love must ripen into adoration. Adoration must ripen into worship, into surrender, and then into the extinction of the self.

Therefore, loving is dying. To love is to die. And when you cease to exist, in love that is, "I must be alive so that I can enjoy my love, bask in my love, drown myself in my own love," that is narcissistic, psychologically speaking, and it is destructive. So, to say that love and death are linked, is also a lesser truth than to say that love is death. Truly, when you love, you seek only the other, you think only of the other. Only the other exists — you don't exist. It is love which gives form to substance, to essence.

When you see a simple mote of dust dancing in a beam of light, it is the light which illuminates that mote of dust. And if the mote of dust was to think, "Oh, look at me, how grand I am, how beautiful I am. Look at the glitter and the glamour of my existence," — the next second, it is out of the beam of light, and it has fallen back. "Dust thou art, unto the dust thou shalt return." A wind takes up a puff of dust, whirls it around into a tiny whirlwind, and there it goes dancing along the pavement merrily, you see, an inverted cone, drunk in its own movement, in its own capacity to move, in its form, in the

dance of the wind. If the dust thinks, "Here I am, look at me, how wonderful I am!", the wind lets go, and the dust is back on the pavement from which it came.

The spirit takes up matter, makes it fit for itself, embodies it — itself, and there you have a body — white, black, tall, short, it doesn't matter. When this idea comes, that this body is so wonderful, this body is so beautiful, this body is so attractive — the ego comes, the love of the self comes, the narcissistic love comes, selfishness comes, and love goes out the door. That is why, today, there is so little love in this world. It is all self, self, self!

So, what is necessary to bring back the bliss of love, the glory of love, the transcendental experiences of love, and the ability to transcend love itself into a final extinction of the self — to die to oneself? Which is what Babuji Maharaj, in spiritual terms, called the living death, the living dead. What is necessary? First of all, you must make the person you love, more and more loveable in your own estimation. That is why we have this ancient ritual of beautifying temples, beautifying the idol, beautifying it with jewellery, with silks, with garlands. That is why a bride is dressed up to be beautiful, why a bridegroom puts on his best suit, shaves himself, perfumes himself. Because, to the beloved, the lover must prostrate in obeisance. Not obeisance in the French sense of obedience, but in an act of worship. Love is worship. Where there is worship, the other is — I won't say superior, because superior and inferior are worldly terms — in some sense adorable.

Therefore, we have the adoration of the Magi, for instance. They who brought the gifts, not merely of camphor and myrrh and things like that, but the gift of their presence, their wisdom, their blessing. When somebody comes to our door, he brings something with him. It would be wrong to think that the baby Christ was already so great, that the three wise men from the East came to adore him. They came to

adore the potential that was yet in him. They came to bless him, and said, "All this, you have in you. Exploit it. Bring it out. Let it shine. Even if it is to end in your crucifixion and death."

The baby Christ was not worshipable, in my opinion. This may go against theological Christianity, you see, or Christian theology. It is only in the expression of that which is hidden in us, the potential, that we can achieve such values of life as we are bestowed with, endowed with. Every child is potentially divine. Nothing makes Jesus, the baby, more divine than another baby. What made him divine was his achievement, his forgetting himself, his learning the art of helping others, his dedication to others — finally, his giving up his life for the sake of others. That is what gave him such divinity as he possesses — not his birth. But unfortunately, religion wants to cover up and mystify, and therefore you have all this theological nonsense of a virgin birth, etc.

I sometimes suspect that the inhuman treatment given to our women in this world, especially in the West, can be ascribed, in no small measure, to this nonsense of the virgin birth of Christ. It is as if Christ's birth would have been dirty had he been born in the normal way, and therefore they seek to make it something of a mystery, something unhuman, inhuman. Casting upon woman a defilement, a corruption, through the agency of the church, so that men have come to look upon women as something dirty, ugly — to be used and thrown away. I would squarely blame the church for this. If men today look upon women as nothing more than what they call mere chattel, part of the blame at least is the Christian theology's. This is my humble opinion. Now, how can you love such a woman? How can you worship and adore her? You can only use! Like, in Christianity, Christ uses his mother. She is still the mother Mary, the holy mother. If that was so, why not a normal birth as any other human being?

So you see, in divinising one we should not make the other profane. In divinising the child, the mother should not be made a profane object. In giving the child a divinity, the mother should not become something of a devil! That is, in ennobling one, the other should not fall.

Therefore, we have this mystery in spirituality, "service without servility," as Babuji emphasized again and again. We serve, but we are nobody's servants. Servants serve for money, out of fear, for existence. We serve because we love. In marriage, too, there must be this idea of service — the wife serving the husband, the husband serving the wife. There is nothing wrong in a woman bringing a pair of shoes and polishing it for her husband if he is busy. This happens every day in India. Here, people would say, "What is this?" Because here, you have this absolute contradiction, that on one side, you have neither love nor respect for your women; on the other, socially you put them on a pedestal, and pretend to ennoble them, put them in silks, put them in rouge, put them in lipstick, satin, gold, diamonds. For what? For your pleasure. There is no love behind all this. There is only selfishness. "My wife is beautiful. I can bring her a glass of water, but she should not get up to give me a glass of water. Women must remain seated and extend a limp hand when somebody is introduced! They are too fragile." But later on, after the party is over, what happens? It would be a mild statement to say, there is only rape after that! "This is my body, it is for my pleasure. This is my bed, this is my satin, this is my silk. This is my Georg Jensen flower vase! I have absolute right over this."

So you see, the absolute contradiction! Love, in one way brandishing, beautifying the object that it is supposed to be loved, in public — putting it to shameful, dishonourable use, in private. This is the tragedy of so-called modern love, because you want to live, even at the cost of the other.

So, here love does not mean death — love means life. There is no holiness in modern matrimony. There is only perversity, there is only the humiliation, there is subjecting somebody to your will. How can such a love flourish? A slave will try to break his chains and run away. You cannot blame a slave for it. Throughout history slaves have tried to run away. They have died in the process. Today you find people breaking the marriage bond, trying to run away, dying in the process, too.

So you see, if you don't die in love, you will have a different type of death — in fear, hatred, sorrow, misery. Death is inevitable. One death is unglorious, painful, miserable, self-destructive. The other death is glorious, worshipful, full of love, full of what, in Christianity, they call the beatitude.

So, all that we do, when we inculcate our children and ourselves with the spirit of holiness, with the attitudes of holiness, the ability to worship that which we love, to adore that which we love, to surrender to that which we love, to finally die for that which we love — we are seeking a form of death which transcends death. It is no longer death. I die without dying. Death, for me, no more exists. It is erased from the slate of my existence in eternity. Such a person never dies, because he has died to himself, by himself. For such a person, death can have no fears. Since he cannot die, we call such persons immortal. They are there forever. Their love is inextinguishable. Why is it inextinguishable? Because, they no longer love — they **are** love.

So, you see how closely love and death are linked. To die in love means to live forever. To die thinking of yourself, in your selfishness, in your own personal vainglory, is to die forever. One is the way to immortality, the other is the way to hell, to recurrence — eternal recurrence, as one psychologist has called it, again and again and again, until we learn to love, to sacrifice, to die to ourselves.

I think, at least on the occasion of a marriage, it is very important to understand these things, and to try to bring into your lives these values that must be cherished. We must seek them first, find them, cherish them, help them to grow in us, until the values remain and we are gone. In such a society, values will continue to exist when people have gone. Now, people go, leaving behind what — statues, books, names carved on stone or on newspaper tabloids.

Therefore we feel, even today, Babuji's presence, and we shall continue to feel it forever, because his presence was nothing more than his life of love and sacrifice, which took up a body to show itself to us, to train us to adopt those values, to make them grow in us. Until, having become like him, his body was no longer necessary, the spirit let go, and there you have the mystery of, "Dust thou art, and to the dust thou shalt return."

Thank you.

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LOVE HAS NO REASON

London, England
21 September, 1992

I will speak maybe a few words, an extension of what Patrick Fleury has said. In India we talk of the eternal present, philosophically speaking. There is no moment other than the present. This is a truth of philosophy, but what we try to achieve is the realisation of that truth in our life.

Patrick started off by saying, "I have been happy," and he didn't know why. I didn't know why myself. But then, the funny thing is, do we need to know why? I mean, why on earth should I know why I am happy? Perhaps I may need to know why I am sick, because the cause of the sickness has to be removed. If I am unwell, the cause of that un-wellness has to be removed. If I am sad, the reason for that sadness has to be removed. But to be happy and healthy and wise? "Oh, why am I wise?" And somebody says, "Well, shouldn't you know the cause of why you are wise?" So, the wisdom of being wise. I once bought a book on a subject which I could hardly pronounce. The title was *Axionoetics* — knowledge of knowledge. And of course, I must confess, I couldn't read

beyond the first paragraph. It was all Greek to me, very literally, because *axio-noetics* itself is Greek!

And I don't know this craze for knowing 'why'. I think the good Lord, in his mercy, confined science to the role of telling us 'how'. Science has never been able to say 'why'. It is supposed to say 'how', and it has been trying to say 'how' for everything. Sometimes I am reminded of the great Indian leader, Sitting Bull. When somebody came to see him, he said, "How!" So, I don't need to know the 'how' or the 'why'. It is good enough for me, it is satisfying enough for me, that things work. Somebody makes it work.

Now, when do I need to know why and how a thing works? Or, let us say, forget the why — **how** a thing works. If I want to duplicate it by my own effort, I should know it. Otherwise it is unnecessary, to say the least. Suppose Micheline makes a good soup for me. I don't have to immediately ask her, "How did you make this soup?" "Oh, I put in some parsley and some ginger, and some tomatoes." "Oh, I see!" I'm enlightened. I pretend to be enlightened. Next day I go to Jacky and say, "You know, Micheline made wonderful soup yesterday. Some parsley and some onions, and yes, some tomatoes!" He says, "Oh, I see," and he puts in some parsley, and some onions, and tomatoes in some saucepan or something and cooks up something, and it isn't at all anything like what Micheline made — something totally different.

So you see, it is not enough to know all these things, nor is it necessary. I am happy to eat good soup when somebody is happy enough to invite me to eat it. Sometimes I am happy, sometimes I am not, but it doesn't depend on the soup! If somebody thinks I am happy because I ate good soup, it is as stupid as saying, "I am very sad because I ate good soup." My happiness has nothing to do with soups or anything else. Cabbages and kings — nothing matters. My happiness must be independent of everything — that means **causeless**. Any

situation can last only when it is causeless. Please remember this, try to understand it, because anything which has a cause, is limited by that cause in its effect. A small matchstick has an effect. An explosion has an effect. An atom bomb has its effect. But they all last only with the potential that was expressed, or was latent, or as Patrick said, dormant in the cause.

Now, how can something be infinite? Because there is no infinite cause. Or, if there is an infinite cause, we have to find out what it is. So, as Babuji Maharaj said, there can be causes without effects, effects without causes. I can be happy without having to know why, without there being no reason at all for my happiness. That is true happiness. Babuji said, "He who is happy under all circumstances is the truly happy person." That means, any cause must have that effect of making me happy. Now, this is obviously ridiculous to an Occidentally-educated mind. That all causes must have the same effect — "For heaven's sake, what is this guy talking about? All causes to have the same effect? Then why a multiplicity of causes?" Precisely. Why on earth should there be a multiplicity of causes, if I am to achieve only one effect? So, one cause is enough for one effect. Why a cause at all?

So you see, from a multiplicity of causes, to a multiplicity of effects, multiplicity of cause from one effect, one cause for one effect, no cause for one effect. In a sense, this would seem to be the progress in our wisdom, that I can be what I am or I want to be, or what I ought to be, in Babuji's language, without any cause or reason for that. Spirituality says, there must be no reason for you to love. "Why should I love God? What will he give me?" You know, many people ask, "What is the benefit I will get out of meditation?"

So, the moment you talk of some return, of course, it is a very cheap way of looking at spirituality. "What will I get in return?" This is not, as Babuji said, *sauda* — transaction, buying and selling. Here, it is giving. No buying, no selling. In

giving there is no selling. The moment you give with the intention of receipt, or receiving something, it is selling. When we love somebody else with the idea of a return, you are selling yourself. If you do receive something, the other person is selling something, in return for what he or she expects. Much more so when you claim to love God, and you say, "Oh, I have been loving God, I have been praying to him, I have been devoted to him, but look at the mess I am in!" Yes, but can you love God, and somebody else, too? This is what the Christian tradition says: "Thou shalt not love God and Mammon." The "Thou shalt not" should have been, "It is not possible to love God and Mammon." "Thou shalt not" seems to be something of an injunction, an order, a command. And we rebel. "Who on earth is this guy to tell me not to love God and Mammon? Let me try it. Mammon is so wonderful!"

So, we relegate God to some time in the future. "No, no, let us take up spirituality when I am fifty, when I am sixty. Chari, this is too early, you know, I just married, I am on my honeymoon, what do you expect me to do, meditate? Not now, please! I'll come back from my honeymoon. Then we will start meditation." And after the honeymoon, there are more reasons for postponing, and it goes on and on until the day comes when Mammon has had his day, as it were, and now we say, "Enough! Mammon, leave me in peace." But Mammon says, "I have you in my grip, my dear friend." "Loosen it, because you are holding tight to me. You are holding me tight in your grip." "You let go of me. I never held you. You held me." "Yes, but you are so tempting, you are so alluring." "Not my fault. I never tempted anybody, I don't think I am alluring, I have not enticed, I have not seduced. It's all in your mind. Let go!" Then comes the realisation that perhaps Mammon had nothing to do with it. The Mammon was in me!

But it takes a long time, you see, all this thing of Mammon and God, and thou shalt not, and thou shalt not, ad nauseum. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not covet. The moment you say "not" — thou shalt not —

there is rebellion, there is this principle of liberty, human rights, human free will, my freedom to make my own destiny. Who gave that freedom, I don't know. No God spoke to me and said, "Chari, you are free to make your destiny as you choose. I shall wait." Nobody said it. First of all, God could not say it, because there is no question of waiting for him. He is eternal. There's no question of waiting. Only one who has an existence in temporality has to wait or not wait, has to expect or not expect, has to achieve or not achieve. One who is eternal has nothing to wait, because he is not in time any more. There is no time element which is controlling his destiny, and saying, "Not today; tomorrow," or "What was yesterday shall not be today." The past frightening us, the future enticing us, the present blocking us. Because the present is a moment in which we are always trying to reconcile the potentiality of the past with the achievement of the future. Not realising that the past is dead, the future is not yet, and such potentiality as is available, is now in the present.

So, what is the problem of the past and the future? My past cannot affect my future a whit. If I determine that is the present, it shall be what I choose. In this sense, every one of us is the master of our destinies. I don't need God. The devil is nowhere near me. He cannot be if I say, "I am the master of the present," in the present, not in the future. "Oh, Chari, I shall be, in twenty years, something." No! It's not enough. "I want to be, but after I have achieved this and this and this." No! "I shall renounce, after I have enjoyed this and this and this." Not at all. "But you know, it is so easy, Chariji. You know, I can do something and then come to you for cleaning." Not possible, because what you are doing is in the present, the cleaning is in the future, which may or may not exist for you.

So, he who depends on the future for his progress, for his redemption, for his salvation, for his liberation, is depending on something which is not in his control — time. Time is not in our control. Time is only in the control of a person who has risen out of time, who has risen beyond time. I

cannot control a river, swimming in the river. I must be outside. It is a matter of common sense, that if I have to control the flow of something, I must be out of that flow myself. So, who can do it? Only one who has slipped out of the hold of time, the current of time, and can watch time flow by. For him, there is no time.

We were talking of measuring time, one of the Einsteinian dreams — how to 'time' time? Of course, if you go into it in a rather mechanical or scientific way, it can lead to what the scientists call 'infinite regress' — a clock to time, a clock to time, a clock to time, a clock..., and it goes on. It is absurd! But in this sense, of one who is eternal, watching time flowing past him, watching the past, the present, and the future, all simultaneously present before him. What is he waiting for? What can he wait for? What is it that he has to do in the future? Because for him, everything is in the present. Therefore, if you want to interact with someone, that someone must be in your present. I cannot interact with my grandson, who is yet to be born in the future, or with my grandfather who died thirty years ago. I can only interact with people who are with me now, here in my presence. In my presence means present with me, here and now.

So, if I want to interact with the Divine, I must be with Him **here** and **now,** in this moment, in this place, in this time. He and I must be together, otherwise no interaction. This is the secret of constant remembrance, incidentally, that I can create or bring into my present Him whom I am remembering all the time. He is eternally with me, which means that I am eternally with Him, which means that His eternality and my eternality are no different.

This is what divinisation really means. Divinisation does not mean some abracadabra, and there arises a super human being with four hands, and infinite wisdom, and infinite powers, and infinite everything. It means nothing of that sort. It means I, in my absolute utter humanness, am possessing

nothing more than the wisdom that my Master gave me to remember him without a gap in that remembrance. And by that small effort, which anybody is capable of — it doesn't need education, it doesn't need wisdom, it doesn't need anything — this simple act of remembrance brings into my present that which is eternal, which is beyond time, beyond space, beyond causality. And by that association of Him with me, I partake of His infinity, His eternality, His non-causality. So, what to do first? Become divinised! Bring the divine into your existence. If you want to perfume this room, you bring in a few flowers. If you want to bring illumination, you light a candle. If you want divinisation, bring Him in.

So you see, we should not have all these fantasies coming from Robin Hood and Mickey Mouse and Superman, that God is a super-giant, with a super-appetite, with super-powers, with super, shall we say, credit cards. Somebody was suggesting yesterday, that there should be a MasterCard which would be valid there. I said, "There is!" What is it? "My heart." If, in that heart I have engraved the presence of my Master, which is indelible with time, or through any other agency, **that** is my credit card which can grant me automatic entry into His realm. But if I already have achieved it here, what need for that credit card? If, in this heart, my Master is already there, what need to recite names, what need to remember forms, what need for even meditation?

Remember that Babuji Maharaj said, "Cleaning is to remove samskaras. Transmission is to bring in the guru's grace, such as it is, into your heart. Meditation is to gain regulatory ability over your mind. Constant remembrance is to create love." All are processes. None of them is, in fact, an achievement, though you say, "Oh, I'm able to meditate now for one hour at a time." It is not an achievement. It is only that you are able to keep the process continuous, beyond the shorter periods of time that you were able to before. Five minutes, to ten minutes, to fifteen, to twenty. It only shows a prolongation of the same ability, nothing more. Therefore,

Babuji said, "If you can meditate correctly for one second, you don't need to meditate again," which only means that when we are meditating for hours together over months and years, we have never meditated for even one second correctly.

That is what is meant by diving. Babuji Maharaj said, "If there are pearls on the bed of the ocean, no amount of swimming on the surface will produce a pearl for you." You can swim infinitely on the surface of the ocean. Nothing will happen. But if you want to get a pearl, dive down vertically. Here, we dive **up** vertically. I don't know how you can dive up, but we can.

So you see, the whole secret of spiritual life is to bring Him into the present, into my present, into the now of everyone's existence, and keep Him there. I may be able to bring Him occasionally by invoking His presence, as an act of His mercy towards me, His compassion towards me, His love for me, but that is His work. If I have to bring Him, what must I do to deserve this? I must have the ability, by virtue of nothing more than my love for Him, to say, "Please come," and He must be here before me. Only love can bring God before us. Therefore, Babuji said, it is the most potent force in the universe. There is no force greater than love.

Now, of course, we don't mean by love what is understood normally in today's culture, what the church used to call 'carnal love'. We don't mean that at all. Carnal love is there, must be there — nothing wrong with it, provided it is love and not lust. Carnal love has a place, as an expression of one's tenderness, of one's love, for a purpose for which it was designed or, shall we say, for which Nature bestowed that capacity on us. Apart from that, it is misuse. There is nothing sinful about it, but misuse is a sin. If God gave me a brain to think with, and I use it to rob banks, it is a misuse. If God gave someone the power to love, and that power to love is misused — same thing, you see.

All the capacities that have been given to us are meant to ennoble us, so that others can be in turn ennobled by association with us. You put something with camphor, the whole thing smells of camphor. You put in a packet of these leaves that the French are so fond of, in an *armoire* full of clothes and it keeps it fresh. Why, in nature, everything is able to participate in this exchange of qualities? And why, in human intercourse, only the worst is exchanged, and the best is kept at home? Two humans beings meet and there is always a downfall of them both. I am bold enough to say always, because under today's conditions, it is almost inevitable that this downfall happens. Scientists meet, and they talk of homosexuality. Doctors meet, and they talk of AIDS. Mothers meet, and they are talking of their divorces. Children meet, and they are talking of their problems with their parents. What is there that is upgrading in this intercourse between human beings? Are we meeting anything which is enlightening, ennobling, encouraging, enlivening, giving us hope, giving us a blessedness, giving us cause for joy? It is always misery. Today, if you meet someone, you go home weeping either for him, or for yourself, or for both, God forbid. It is as if two candles should meet and mutually extinguish each other, instead of burning brighter.

So, you see the degradation that has come upon society — nothing more — there is no sin, there is no original sin. It is human sin, created by us, again and again, out of nothing more than misuse of the capacities, divine capacities, given to us for love, for ennoblement, for encouragement, for mutual uplifting. All this we have lost. Now, we only degrade each other when me meet. We despoil each other when we meet. We defile each other when we meet, so that human beings have now withdrawn into the loneliness of their inner shells — **shells,** not selves — and are happy to be alone, completely isolated, even from themselves, because fear of the self is the biggest fear. We are not afraid of anything — one who is not afraid of himself or herself has no fear of anything outside.

The man who is afraid to walk outside a pub, is afraid not of the pub, but of himself. He does not know the attraction of a glass bottle. He does not want to face it. He is terrified. "No, no, no! I can't see a bottle of beer, Chari. Because, if it is there, I am finished!" Now, what is this man worth? A bottle of beer and he is finished?

Babuji Maharaj said, in Paris airport to Andre Poray, 1972 if I remember right — we were sitting next to one of these bars in the airport, gleaming with chromium and stainless steel and polished bottles and crystals, and Babuji said, "We must be like these bottles: full of wine, but not drunk!" Whereas these miserable mortals, you know, after half a bottle of beer, you are tottering around on your feet. What are you worth? This was Babuji's idea, you see, his question. A mere glass bottle can hold a bottle of whiskey in it, allow it to mature within it, and not be corrupted by it. And here you are, you measly human beings, with nothing more than your inadequacies and lusts and passions — one moment and you are lost. What are you worth? You are not even a glass bottle. So you see what was implied in his comment to Mr. Andre Poray. It has that which intoxicates you, but it is itself not intoxicated.

So, what is the moral of this? That we must have the ability to turn the world inside ourselves, but be the dominant factor. I must be the master of the world which is within me. We are trying to master the world which is outside, to master the universe which is outside. What about that which is inside? The much vaster universe, that which creates the universe outside, that which is mirrored by the universe outside. You see misery outside because there is misery inside. You see sickness outside because there is sickness inside. You see despair outside because there is despair inside. Clean this, and that reflects this inner glory, the inner tranquillity, this inner, what shall I say, immensity of the universe, its kindness, its nobleness, its generosity, its hope, and most of all, its possibility of bringing the entire future into the present, in one

condensed reality of eternal existence. Is it possible? Yes. What is the proof? Existence of people who are able to speak about it. You can never speak of something which you have not known. The man who has never eaten an apple cannot speak about an apple. If you cannot even speak of an apple without eating an apple, how are you going to speak of God without having known God?

So, we have to trust people who are able to talk of divinisation, having achieved it themselves, assuring us that the path is available, assuring us that the path is not outside, but inside, telling us that you are the way, you are the wayfarer, you are the goal. What Christ said, in another way, "I am the way and the light and the truth." He did not say it only for himself. He said, "I am the light, I am the way, I am the truth, and none shall reach the father but through me." Every one of us can say this if, in our own existence, we each one of us become the way, the light, and the truth. Because, the way is not the way only for yourself — it is for all. Therefore, such a person who has achieved this divinisation, or this oneness with that Ultimate which we call God, becomes a way for others to tread upon. This is the, what shall I say, the truth behind which, or based upon which you find in Indian temples, on the steps going up, people's names are carved. They are trying to become the way by making others walk upon them. But it doesn't work. They are only being trampled upon. He who walks the way, he who walks the way and makes himself the way, is never trampled upon, but he becomes that through which people may pass into the infinity which he has become.

So you see, this is the promise of spirituality. It is not something silly, or something to be achieved, or something to be got, or something to be experienced. It is something we have to become, and having become that, to allow others to become by using us. This is why I have been talking a bit to preceptors, that they should now realise the seriousness of the responsibilities they have undertaken. Their job does not end with giving a few sittings, giving somebody a cleaning, as my

sister Ros very correctly said. There is a certain degree of sanctimoniousness in this nonsense of "Oh, go and clean yourself." "I had a dream." "Clean it out." "I had an experience." "Put it in your diary." Okay, good advice, but the preceptors are supposed to do something more. They are supposed to be available to an abhyasi. Available means, what the French call *disponible*, you know? There! You know, you cannot put a cake into a shop counter for six minutes and then remove it, saying nobody bought it when it was available. It has to be there till somebody takes it. Preceptors have to be available, heart and soul. They have committed to this work — I hope so! At least they thought so when they volunteered to become preceptors. I don't think there is anybody who has been compelled to become a preceptor — everybody volunteered. Having volunteered, this is a golden opportunity, it is a reversal of the process, that now, through service, you can become the way.

You see, whatever I learned of spirituality, I learned only by working. People say, "How to love Master?" I never bothered. I am not capable of love. I don't think any human heart is capable of that love of which we are speaking here — the transcendental love, the totally unselfish love, the love which extinguishes the lover for the sake of the beloved. I don't think that exists on earth today anywhere. But there is the alternative way of service — learning to love by serving someone, through association, through that service, learning to love. There are two possibilities in this — that you may also despise the one whom you serve, because, you know, too close an association with the beloved can cause havoc. You have only to see the television advertisements about removing mouth odours — toothpaste, mouthwash, because when you come too close to your beloved, it seems that a proper perfume is necessary for it.

So, if that is the case with merely mundane human love, what about the divine? I have known people who got close to Babuji, being sometimes pushed back, as it were, because he

had the capacity to assume any character, any capacity, any sort of human facet of behaviour as he chose. He could be most enchanting, he could be terrifying, he could be appealing. He was loveable. Some people hated him, many were afraid of him. So, how to get close? Therefore, we think the Master must be a loveable person — old, toothless, soft, cuddly, teddy-bearish — it must be easy to love. But the demand of love is, can you love when love is impossible? Any fool of a woman can love a child which is beautiful. What about unfortunate children who are born with less than the average human capacity? Don't you love that child more? Which mother will throw away her, shall we say, slightly deformed child just because it is deformed, one finger missing? On the contrary, the mother's heart flows more towards such things. She loves that child more, because, in some sense, in some mysterious way, she has to fulfil for the child by a greater love than a merely human love, its incapacities.

Should we not transpose this equation into the Master also? The less loveable, the more we should love. So, that love we should love, does not mean that the object should be loveable. "No, no, I don't like my husband. He was nice when I married him." Of course, all husbands are nice when we married them, and all wives are also nice when the husband marries. What happens after three months, six months? "No, no, I thought he was nice." But you don't think something is nice; you know it is nice, you feel it is nice. "No, no, but Chariji, he was different then." So, does your love depend on his being something that you want him to be, without which you cannot love him? Your child, if it fails in the examination, will you send him to the poor home? Your father, when he loses his teeth, will go into the geriatric home? Your husband, when he loses his potency, will be sent out like cows to be slaughtered? That is not love. If you love, you must love forever. Having loved, love forever. Having loved, continue to love him, and him alone. No change! This is not like a torch

which illuminates anything that you put it upon. That's okay for the torchlight, but our love shines once, and then always, on the same thing. Now, what is the logic of loving the Master, or loving God? **There**, everything is. What we seek and don't find here, we shall find **there**.

But does it mean I should love God and not love my husband or my wife? Not at all, because **this** love is at a different level, **that** love is in a different dimension altogether. **That** love does not exclude **this** love and **this** love must not exclude **that** love, because people say, "No, no, I love my husband, and you know, he doesn't like spirituality. He will not permit me to come. He is a jealous husband." Now, this is also a fault of Christianity, that the God of Christianity is a jealous god. More so, the god of Judiasm. "I am a jealous God. Thou shalt worship no God but me." I mean, what sort of a stupid god is he who says, "Thou shalt worship no god but me"? Does he recognize the presence of other gods? It is implicit in his statement that, "There are other gods, but don't go near them. Come only to me." It is like a man saying, "Having married me, thou shall not look upon other men." In that very injunction, he is opening up the possibility for his wife to think of other men. So, what is this god of Judiasm who says, "Thou shalt worship no other God but me." It is crazy! If God is one, can God himself say, "Do not worship any other God but me."? So, it opens up to the human being also to say in a similar fashion, "Thou shalt love none but me. Not even God."

So, we find this stupidity that men and women say, "No, no, I am in a loving *couple*." As the French say, "We have a loving *couple* and I don't want to disturb it." What is this *couple*? Put it in a cupola and burn it. A merely human love to exclude divine love? How can it be possible? It is not possible, it is stupid!

So, human love must make us aware of the possibility of loving God **through** this very human love which you are

experiencing, in which we find so much bliss, ecstasy, and possibility of producing ourselves in the future. In the Sanskrit verse it says, "*Atma vai jayate putrah.*" "For the father is reborn in his son." That is why we take pleasure in our children. That's why a father likes to say, "The son looks like me!" and the mother likes to say, "The daughter looks like me!" or they quarrel over who looks like whom. Human love is the base upon which divine love must be founded. This must teach us to love. But how can it teach us to love the divine unless it teaches us to love the human properly?

What should love mean? What is love? Is it love of the body, love of the mind, love of the soul? Is it just taking, taking, taking? Is it giving? Is it for pleasure? Is it for procreation? It is for all this, and for none of this. Love must have no reason. In the beginning, it has a reason: a man loves his wife, or falls in love with the girl who's going to be his wife, for various reasons. He may fall in love with her intelligence, with her beauty, for everything put together, but when all these things change, the love must remain.

As Babuji said, "If you bring a basket of flowers into this room, and take them away after half an hour, the flowers are gone, but the perfume remains." You bring a bag of fish into the house, the fish go away but the stink remains. In nature, everything leaves something behind. The human leaves nothing behind except his name. His presence is not left behind. Now, what is the use of a presence that **was**, if there is no presence that **is** today?

So, in the final analysis, you see, the value of a human existence, of a human life properly lived, is — is he still here, having gone? If it is yes, that is a divine presence. If it is no, it is a merely mortal presence. Dust thou art, and to the dust thou shalt return, buried. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, though the wind takes the wind element, the dust takes the dust, fire takes the fire, water takes the water, etc.

So, the purpose of the human life is to create a presence which shall be eternal. That presence cannot be physical, it cannot be mental, it cannot be moral, it cannot be intellectual. It is a presence. If we live in such a way that our presence is created and which shall be here after we are gone, ours is a life properly lived. If not, it is no use. So, what we are endeavouring to do here is precisely to enable each one of us to create that presence in us, so that when, in the fullness of time, we have to go, and we **shall** go, the presence will remain as guideposts for others. That is the purpose of spirituality.

Thank you.

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PARTICIPATE IN EVOLUTION

London, England
21 September, 1992

I feel like the packaging department of a warehouse. The goods have been manufactured, they have been sold, now they are being wrapped up, and the wrapping is going to be thrown away the moment you come out of the store. All that beautiful paper, printed nicely in colours, gilt gold, silver, it is heartlessly crumpled up and thrown into the nearest wastepaper basket — big ones, nowadays. I saw one round the corner here, a great green box, or something like that. It was very impressive. I was never good at learning English, by the way. I am an Indian, and I had these funny grammar classes, where they told me about metonymy and synecdoche, something which I could hardly pronounce.

So, there is always this danger of mistaking the thing for the container, or something like that, the thing for the thing contained. And talking about this packaging and wrapping the product, talking of trees, talking of seeds, talking of the human heart, I think they have all one thing in common: there is a package wrapped in each one of them. The seed contains life,

the living force which is going to manifest itself as another tree. In fact, I once read somewhere, something which impressed me very greatly; that a tree is nothing but a seed's way of propagating itself. All this blah, blah, about green environment and beautiful trees, the canopy, the trunk, the leaves, the oak, the Canadian attachment to the maple leaf. No! We are going off the beaten path, or what should be the beaten path, admiring the tree and the leaves, when what we should be admiring is the seed that produced this immense tree, just to produce some more seeds. Otherwise, we become like the barren fig tree of the Bible — produced nothing. Now, instead of admiring the seed, protecting the seed, in which the future is contained, we are always protecting the trees, protecting the green environment, which is surely going to die however well you may protect it, technologically or otherwise. It is better to carry a handful of seeds and go to Mars and start planting them there, than to protect all the trees here, if they are going to die away in the next twenty years, two thousand years. It doesn't matter.

I want to draw your attention to a peculiar inversion in values, that when we buy something, we throw away the wrappings. And, if I am able to make myself clear, what is the product that is wrapped up in the human system? According to us, my Master's teaching, it is the heart. But here, we have this peculiar inversion: we throw away the product and keep the package, the wrapping in all its glitter, glamour, beauty, colour, silk, satin. The product is thrown away — the heart is broken, cut into pieces, scattered into the winds, and we are clasping the bodies as if they are going to last for an eternity. So, you see the inversion, the peculiar inversion with those really beautiful wrappings. I mean, I really admire them. Sometimes I feel like rolling up all that paper and taking these cartons home. I have seen cartons which are more beautiful to me than the product that comes in them. It is a tremendous strain for me not to take the cartons home to India. Had they been collapsible and light, my house would be full of cartons.

But, what is it that makes us human beings, intelligent human beings, educated human beings, love the wrapping in the human being and throw away the product? It happens again and again. All this talk of love! I am always reminded, rather vulgar, I am always reminded of a quatrain, or a song, or a refrain from some song: "Love is a four letter word: L-U-S-T."

So, how much of love is there in our human existence? All the preceding speakers have suggested that Sahaj Marg is nothing but love. Wise people have said, "God is love." If God is love, love must be God. Then where is that God in our affairs? Love affairs, as we say, the French put it so elegantly, *"L'affaire de coeur."* I am tempted to say, "*L'affaire de corps*." A little change in the spelling, and a *coeur* becomes a *corps* — C-O-R-P-S. And add an 'E' for the English, and that's what you end up with most of our love affairs — a corpse. Two dead human beings out of each affair, because there is no love. The product, wrapped up in all this elegant, beautifully dressed, beautifully adorned system, is mercilessly thrown away. It is not even recognized that it is necessary. Who cares for the heart? Wonderful eyes, as Jacky suggested (Frenchman, you know), going straight to the target: beautiful eyes, beautiful nose, beautiful what else I don't know, we don't have to enumerate. The heart does not figure anywhere. The only place in which I have seen the heart worshipped in France, is in that famous church, *Le Sacre Coeur*, the Sacred Heart. If it is a sacred heart, how did it become a sacred heart? Why is it called a sacred heart?

So you see, we have to re-examine our whole thrust in life. What am I after? When I marry, what am I after? When I express myself, what am I expressing? Is it an accident that a human being is always described by the heart? "She is cold-hearted, he is warm-hearted. That person has a heart of ice," etc. Why is the heart chosen to describe a human being? All the others are foolish descriptions, passport descriptions — height, weight, colour of the eyes, colour of the hair. They are

for identification. But the essence of the human being is always expressed through the heart — warm-hearted, soft-hearted, kind-hearted, gentle-hearted, compassionate heart. How can we have any compassion if we have no heart? Because, I would like to suggest that every time you throw away somebody else's heart, you are also throwing away your own. Because he who values not the heart, doesn't know the difference between his own heart and somebody else's heart. "No, no, retain the package. You see, I have retained my package."

So you see, it is necessary to go to the core of the problem. What is it that makes our society materialistic is not that we are surrounded by a material existence, that we have beautiful things, that we live in beautiful houses. It is not that at all. Because, in the ancient tradition, there have been sages who have been kings and emperors who have lived in palaces, who have slept on silk and satin, who have eaten of the best. Nevertheless, the heart was still intact in them. They valued the heart, not the palace. They looked through the heart, they judged with the heart, they spoke with the heart. Sincerity means to speak with your heart. Honesty means to speak with your heart. Compassion means to deal with another being, human being, with your heart. Love means to approach one heart with your heart, and bring the two close together, and seal them into one indissoluble unit, one which cannot be separated ever again.

That is why you all have these pictures of two hearts put together, beautifully red hearts, Christmas cards. It is not enough. The less we have of the human heart, feeling for the heart, the more I see hearts everywhere — hearts on pendants, hearts on lockets, hearts around the neck, hearts around the wrists, tiny hearts, golden hearts, amber hearts, crystal hearts — no human hearts. What we lack here [points to heart], we bring outside, we create outside, we try to create outside. But no amount of creation of gold and silver hearts is going to replace this, as my Master said, tiny lump of muscle beating

away. All your life, from the moment you came into this world, to the moment you are going to leave it, that is the one permanent thing. We can live without everything else. We can live without our feet, we can live without our eyes, we can live without our ears, even without the brain, but not without the heart. Heart is life itself. Therefore, one whom you love, you say, "My heart, my dear heart, my sweet heart, my loving heart." But how about you becoming somebody's sweetheart, somebody's loving heart?

How about giving instead of receiving? Because only when you give something, do you know the value of that which you are giving. That is why it is so difficult. That which we don't value we can easily give away. A man who owns millions of things says, "You take my house, you take my car, diamond necklace for this girl, furs for this beautiful woman." He doesn't value them. For him it is tinsel. Are you willing to give that which is dearest to you, which is life itself to you? The true sacrifice of life is this, not in being burned at the stakes. That may be good for sainthood, but for divinisation, are you willing to give your life as embodied in your heart? "Take my heart once and for all. Finish it off." Because, whether we will understand it or not, accept it or not, recognize it or not, this is our problem: heart failure, not in the medical sense, but in the spiritual sense. When my heart fails spiritually, I am now only something like a robot, driven by my desires, my hungers, my appetites, what we call, as Jacky said, *samskara*.

My Master used to suggest that we are hardly human yet, most of us, because we are moving and walking and sleeping and doing all these things, because of some inner compulsion in us, embodied in the seeds of action, which we call samskara. It's very much like a toy wound up to perform a sequence of acts ad nauseum. It repeats the same thing again and again. Therefore our life becomes repetitive; therefore we are not able to change, we go into the same situation, the same hurdle, the same mistakes. Otherwise we should learn from

our mistakes. We don't! Why not? Because of the samskara that is there. You plant a zinnia, you grow a zinnia. You take the seeds of the zinnia, you plant it again, again you have the next race of zinnias, zinnias again and again and again and again. "Gardener, weed the garden." Okay, he has weeded it, but the zinnia is there, because you love it and you cherish it.

So, until this samskaric business is cleaned out, we are slaves of the samskara that we have brought with us. We are machines. Therefore Babuji, my Master, said. "To live, you have to clean out all this muck." There are good samskaras and bad samskaras, but as Jacky explained, there is no good samskara, there is no bad samskara. It is samskara. It is repetition. It is what we call this eternal cycle of birth and rebirth, coming again and again. Not because there is a God waiting to punish you and send you back, but because I have not qualified myself for the next higher class in my school, I am detained. Who detains me? I detain myself. Had I qualified myself for the next higher level, God himself could not stop me from moving up. Why? Because that is Divine law, that is creation. When a mere bubble of trapped air under the bottommost rock — a little touch of the finger and the bubble comes up to the surface. Why? Because it is light. It is a law of nature. We are also bound by laws of nature, that when I become light, I must also go up. And what is this lightness? Remove the samskaras, and I am light.

Now, there is so much talk of guilt and sin. In Sahaj Marg there is no sin, also there is no virtue. As Professor Ivor Browne said, "There is only duty." Now, in the performance of duty, what has to be done is done. What is virtue and vice? These are interpretations. What one society considers immoral, another society considers absolutely moral. When we talk of morality from platforms such as this, I have been accused of trying to bring in Eastern morality into Western culture. The bodies are the same! That which happens is the same. So how can sin be different in your culture and different in mine? Sin is sin wherever you go. Food is food wherever

you go. The air is the same wherever we breathe. The water's the same — we drink. Forget all these differences, minerals, etc.

So, given these fundamental values, virtue and vice, good and bad — we call them the dualities of nature, now how to overcome them? You cannot. Because philosophy says, reason says that, "If you have a coin, there are two sides to the coin. Where the sunlight is the strongest, the shadow is the deepest. Where the good is maximum, the evil is very bad." You have only to see enlightened, so-called advanced societies today where you have the maximum good on the one hand and the most corrupt vices on the other side. The two go together. You develop this on one side, you have to develop this on the other side. It develops by itself. A tree which grows very tall has the deepest roots. It cannot be otherwise. So, when a human being tries to be good, there is the badness in him which is also magnified. It is not that he is more bad because he is more good, but the goodness magnifies the badness. Like on a white surface, a little spot of black stands out glaringly.

So, these ideas of good and bad, you know, judgemental attitudes, punishment and reward, they have all to be thrown out. What is to be retained? Transcending all these values, the opposites of existence, looking neither to the right nor the left, going straight ahead, knowing that left and right are but two so-called boundaries within which I have to pass. Very much like the two railway tracks that carry a train on them, or the corridor through which a plane flies — it cannot stray outside that. They are boundaries to guide us in the right direction, like the riverbank guides the river. It would be wrong to think that the riverbank, or the banks of a river, are constraints to that river. Without it, there would be no river. Without the banks, there would be no river, there would be sheets of water getting absorbed into the ground. It is this bank on either side of the water that makes the water flow at all, gives it force, gives it momentum. It would be foolish of the river to say, "I

prefer this bank and not this bank. Oh, I am the right bank, you know, I love the right bank, because it's right."

I remember a TV lesson on horse riding, where the man is trying to mount from the right, and he keeps falling, and the trainer comes and says, "Which side did you try to get up on? Which stirrup did you mount?" He says, "The right." He said, "In this case, chum, the left side is the right side!" So, what is the left, what is the right? It depends on what you are looking at. And what is the left and right to the river? Which is better for the river? It needs both.

So, we need right and wrong, vice and virtue, not to guide our lives by, but to escape out of them in a direct direction, touching neither. Because if you try to be one, you are going to be ipso facto, willy-nilly, the other, too. So you see, religion enforces these tenets of virtue and vice. As my Master said, "All religions have thrived on two instruments, the twin instruments of temptation and fear." You behave well, I will send you to heaven. You misbehave, I will send you to hell. But spirituality suggests that hell and heaven are created by us, by ourselves, for ourselves. You do something wrong, and you burn in the fires of your own, not ignorance, but guilt. Ignorance might have led you to do something wrong or it might have been wisdom parading as ignorance, or ignorance parading as wisdom. But eventually who suffers? We suffer from our guilt. There is no punishing God. God laughs! He says, "I punish? What on earth for? Are you so big, are you so noble, are you worth even my attention, that I should come down to punish you? Fie!" So who punishes? We punish ourselves. We suffer, we burn in the hell of our own creation.

So you see, we should not fall prey to these religious instruments of fear and temptation, nor be led by the nose by these twin aspects, fear and temptation, avoiding what we are afraid of, being tempted by what temptation is there.

Otherwise, we are like donkeys with a carrot held in front of our nose.

Then what is to guide our life? An evolutionary purpose: I have to become that which I have to become. We are all experts in evolution. All of you have studied, in some way or the other, evolution. We are proud of the fact that the human being is at the culminating peak of evolution, as we think. Not at all! We are there, yes, but certainly it is not the peak. Evolution never ends. I mean, Nature does not put a full stop anywhere in its processes. What looks to us as cyclic could be linear. What looks to us as linear could be cyclic, again and again, repetition, on and on-going. So, that being the case, that being the truth, that being what a wise man realises, how can my evolution stop? So, let me evolve. This is all that we are trying to do in spirituality.

And what do we try to evolve? You call it 'spiritual' because we are dealing with some intangible inner reality which you may call the spirit, the soul, God, whatever you like. Because we see that there is a limit to physical evolution. Nature has tried all the tricks. It has produced enormous beasts, which have collapsed under their own weight, and some say we have reached some sort of an optimal size in the human being. Well, that is as it may be, but there are limits to physical evolution, there are limits to mental growth — limitations. A knock on the head, concussion, and a man is lost in coma, everything learned is gone. Amnesia — everything is wiped out. So, what is it that remains? To have a sustained evolution, free of all these, shall we say, tribulations and trials of life, free from limitations, free from injury, free from robbery, free from murder. It is the soul; it is the spirit. Obviously, to one who thinks, the thrust of the next stage of evolution must be the spiritual evolution. And those who live a spiritual life are trying to participate, partake of that evolution which, what it will lead to, who knows? We have to wait and see.

This is the invitation of spirituality: "Be free of fear, be free of temptation." Don't ask, "What can spirituality do for me?" That is temptation. "Why should I do it?" That is fear. "What about my God?" That is narrow-mindedness. There is no **my** God or **your** God, there is only God. There cannot be two Gods. That being the case, your God cannot be different from my God. Temples and churches? Yes, like palaces and hovels. A king lives in one, a beggar lives in the other, but they are both human beings. Both will die. Both will be cremated or interred with their bones for the worms to eat. A king is no more a king when he is dead and a beggar is no more a beggar when he is dead. These are temporal values, temporal situations, temporal anomalies which, instead of distinguishing us or identifying us, have created schisms in society, split us apart into Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, white, black, Negro, poorer nations, richer nations, aid givers, aid donors, aid receivers and, as I like to end my talk, with AIDS.

So please think over these things. Try to understand the need to participate in evolution. Try to remember that evolution will not be stopped. Nothing has so far managed to stop evolution. From the ooze of the primeval oceans to what we are today, evolution could not be stopped, has not been stopped, must not be stopped! That it cannot be stopped in the future, too, does not need to be said. That being the case, this is like a man who is very wise and who hears of gold somewhere, and rushes to find that gold — the gold rush!

All right-thinking people who are really seekers of the Self, not self-seekers but seekers of the Self, must participate in the spiritual rush, not out of lust for possession or greed for gold but, like the water in the middle of the river flows fastest, those near the banks are inevitably slowed down by contact with the mud on both sides. Why we should avoid too much contact with the material life is because of this, shall we say, frictional effect of the material life on the spiritual. There is no sin in it, there is no virtue in it, there is no pleasure in it, there

is no pain in it. All that is transitory — human evaluation, human perception through the senses. But there is this frictional effect, that even in the mightiest rivers, the water at the banks flows slowest, and if it is trapped in a little cove there, it can spin round and round forever, although it is water, though it is a part of the river.

So, for this basic logic, understanding, we have to be in the centre of the stream, flowing fastest, flowing unimpeded, getting there quick. That is why human beings have to participate in something which is evolutionary, something which appears revolutionary in its concepts, something which may not seem of any instant advantage or instant appeal. Evolution has never been of instant appeal, because it has taken millennia for Nature to achieve each stage in its evolution. But that is Nature's way. The human way is, "When can I do it? And why not now?"

Thank you.

VI

USA

2 to 16 October, 1992

ASHRAM INAUGURATION OCT 2 1992

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ATLANTA ASHRAM INAUGURATION

Molena, Georgia, USA
2 October, 1992

We are happy she [Ruth Chandler, the Mayor of Zebulon from 1987-1991] is participating in this auspicious celebration that we are having here today. In India, we have this idea that *shakti* and *shakta* should go together. That is, the wisdom and the strength of the male, and the power of the female. And in India, the state represents, is represented always by a female. I think it's very apt that sister Ruth is with us today, to totally participate in this celebration, but I hope you continue to participate with us in the working of this retreat, in deriving such benefit, spiritually, that this Mission is able to offer, and to continue with us on this delightful spiritual journey. I welcome you, ma'am.

It is my pleasant duty also to offer from the abhyasis of India a small gift to this ashram. [Presents framed print, with the inscription from the Bhagavad Gita: "O Bharata, whenever there is decline in virtue and rise in unrighteousness, then I send forth Myself."] [applause] It is a scene from the *Mahabarata* entitled *Parthasarathi* where Lord Krishna is driving the chariot of Arjuna, on his war of righteousness against the forces of evil. I think it is appropriate that such a

symbol adorn this ashram, this spiritual retreat centre. I congratulate all of you — those who have worked physically, those who have worked in designing and planning, and those who have come out with that most essential element — money, in building the first half of this ashram. The second half, as you see here, remains to be constructed, but it will come up in its own time. We have just planted a plant there [points to tree]. It will grow in its time.

My Master, my Guruji, used to emphasize that our job is to plant a seed and then to look after it, water it properly, prepare the soil, keep the birds and the bees away from it. In fact, or in effect, protecting it, and giving it an environment conducive to its growth. All that we do in institutions like this is to provide the proper environment, the support, the life support system as we can say, in which we, like seeds, can grow, bloom, blossom and give forth seed for the next generation. An ashram is not merely a building, it is not merely an edifice, it is not merely a memorial to the great Master of the past, my Master, but it is a place where we must come to rest. It is a place of rest, where we can find mental rest, physical rest, spiritual rest. That is the first priority. The second priority is to use the environment for meditation, for contemplation, so that we can grow spiritually.

In today's world, full of high-tech, and hurly-burly, rushing around, competitiveness, aggressive competitiveness, the thing that we get least of all is rest — not rest of the body, because we rarely sleep, and when we wake up the next morning we are already exhausted, even before we go to work. That is the reason why the pharmaceutical giants of this world are becoming bigger and bigger — more and more medication, more and more drugs, more and more soporifics. In fact, most of us live on drugs, not on food any more. I wonder whether sometimes what is said in the Bible, "Man does not live by bread alone," has been misinterpreted! [laughter] And we have added drugs, saying Jesus Christ said, "You shalt take drugs, too!" "Man does not live by bread

alone," meant, and continues to mean, and will ever mean, that physical food is not the only food by which we live.

As Jesus Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world." But in this world we need bread, not for the other world, which is our real kingdom, into which we must go, to which we must enter. The portals are places like this, places of spiritual retreat which belong to no religion, which transcend religion and which enable us to go beyond religion into that realm of God in which there are no religions. Having no religion does not mean being irreligious. Irreligious is something else. That is devilish. That is coming under the sway of negative forces, of evil, as we call it. But transcending religion is something we have to do, because we find that religions divide, religions have always divided people, and continue to divide people. The religious bigotry, the religious hatred, far transcends political and linguistic hatreds that have been the bane of society throughout the human history.

So, in this place, such places as this, which claim a spiritual function, there must be, above all, humanity only, without any distinguishing factors — not even that of male and female. Male and female, God created in His wisdom for purposes of keeping humanity alive. Not for fun, not for pleasure, not for enjoyment, not even for togetherness. Humans are to be together, not man and woman. Where in the Bible you read that the Lord said, "Go forth and multiply," he certainly did not mean procreative multiplication. He did not mean go forth and have eighteen children, twenty-four children, thirty-five children. He did not mean go forth and multiply the pleasures of existence. He certainly meant — multiply your Self. The Self being the transcendental inner Self that moves us, activates us, pervades us, and which is the true Self. When I say, "my Self speaks to me," it is distinct that there are two selves: one, this corporeal self, the other, the inner spiritual Self — that has to be multiplied. Now, how can I multiply that Self, except by making other selves similar to my Self.

So, the real equality that a human being must structure a name for, and create, is the humanity that will be a transcendental humanity with the inner Self, identical in all of us — the same Divine Self, the same inner Self, the same higher Self, the same Godly Self. All other objectives of equalizing human beings — political, social, economic, are here in this world, in this world of the mundane. It can be possible — it will never be possible. It is possible always in a restricted sense. Like we have certain societies which are very high in their standards of living, and certain which are on the point of starvation, death. This is like a see-saw: you elevate one, you depress the other. Physically, my Master used to say, that if you feed somebody, ipso facto, you are denying that food to somebody else. Human beings can give material wealth to one only by denying that same wealth to another.

Education is better, because you can educate somebody without denying education to somebody else. You don't rob Peter to pay Paul. So, education is looked upon as a higher field of activity. So, teachers are looked upon with more respect than, for instance, a financier or your boss.

What about spirituality? This is an ever-flowing stream of well-being, of spiritual creativity, of munificence, of divinity, of Godliness. It robs nobody, yet it is available to everybody. Who is the giver? God himself is the giver. Who is the receiver? In a sense, God himself is the receiver, because He who is in me receives.

What is it that obstructs this process? My lower self, my corporeal self, which says, "I am great. I am already divine." Yes, of course, we are already potentially divine. The potentiality for rising to that higher, uppermost level of what we call humanization, divinisation, perfection, is already in us. The seed is in us. Here, we plant the seed. The Master does it for us. That is what we do in the very first sitting, in the transmission — awakening the seed that is lying latent. It is like having a packet of seeds in your pocket; the latent

potentiality is there. Every seed is a potential plant, a tree, a potential garden, but until it is planted, watered, nourished, it will remain a seed.

The human being has, within himself or herself, the potential seed, which has been lying dormant for God knows how long. If philosophy is to be believed, if spiritual giants of the past are to be believed, we have been carrying the seed through life after life. That is why we are still here. If a seed is still a seed, it cannot be a tree at the same time, though it shall be a tree, it can be a tree. When? When we act in the right manner. So, spirituality says, first of all, "Recognize that the seed is in you."

Normally, like in every other case, in every other facet of existence, crisis brings us to the realisation of our inner worth, of our inner strengths, of our inner potential. One who is afraid of the dark, his mother is sick at night and he has to go for the doctor — his fear drops off. The need of the moment, his love for his mother, makes him drop his fear of the darkness and go and find a doctor. Here you use a telephone, but in India it's a very real situation that we have to walk perhaps three miles, perhaps five miles, and find a doctor and bring him. So you see, where there is love, fear goes. Again, the message of the Bible, the message of my Master, the message of all the great spiritual persons of the past is, "Perfect love casteth out fear."

But, what is the use of just preaching it and reading it in the Bible, or in the Bhagavad Gita, or in the Mahabarata, or in the Talmud? It's no use! We have been reading too many things, not understanding enough. Practising — not at all. That is why people like librarians in the great libraries of this country, for instance, or in my country or yours, they are just giving and taking books, lending books and returning books, making notes on bits of cardboard or on the computer, but they have not read anything themselves.

So, reading is not enough. We must read and understand. And what is understanding for? To enable us to know the worth of what we have read. What worth is it? The worth of its application in my personal life. What is the next step? I must apply that which I have read to my own existence, prove it to myself as a fact, its veracity, its applicability, its, shall we say, effectiveness. And prove it to others, that, "Here! Look at this man. He read, he understood, he applied, and he is what he is." Otherwise, we are only repeating parrot-like things that we have read here and there, things which we have memorized, quoting from books.

Remember what Babuji Maharaj, my Master, said, that he never read, except for a few pages of some Mill's philosophy — Mill's *Utilitarianism*, because he found that if he read it further, he would be only repeating the thoughts of Mill. He wanted to be original, in the sense that he could create a Self in himself, which would produce all the thoughts that are lying latent in this universe of ours. After all, you always say, "I had a thought," or "A thought came to me." From where? Where was the thought before it struck the original creator of that philosophy or that mind? It was somewhere. As Babuji Maharaj said, "What was the wisdom of this world before the Vedas were written, before the Bible came into existence, before the Talmud?" Were people fools? Not at all. Only they had no writing implements, there was no printing. Where did their thoughts come from? Where did the original thinker get his thoughts from? There is a source. That source is available, not only to that original thinker, but to us, too, and that source is within us.

Now, to get to that source of knowledge, of wisdom, of creativity, of the profoundness of life itself, of the goal of life, and the way to achieve that life, for everything, we seek within. Therefore, spiritual wisdom says, "Stop this external search, because that can only give you material satisfaction." Outside yourself, anything that you find pertains to this material world. It may be books, it may be gold, it may be

happiness. That happiness is a material happiness. The happiness of eating a pizza, or an ice cream, or seeing a nice movie, or going out with a lovely girl in a boat. It is transitory, it is momentary — follows the pain of separation. Then what? The next search for a new companionship, a new outing, a new pleasure boat, a new scene — Chattanooga Lake, Pattalooga Lake, Cattalooga Lake. I don't know how many lakes there are [laughter], ad infinitum, ad nauseum, because there is no end to this search. Similarly, the search for anything outside yourself is going on and on and on and on and on. Search for knowledge — can it ever end? Can you say, "I have come to the summit of knowledge?" You find it even in philosophy, you find it in science, you find it in technology. Yesterday's invention is already dead, today's invention is on the plate, tomorrow's invention is going to transcend everything else. Out goes my TV, my car, and my computer. The new generation has come. What is it that transcends time, temporality and, shall we say, which never becomes obsolete? That which is the base of existence itself.

Nobody has built yet a house without a foundation — *La terre*, as the French say it. It is very much there, the ground is always there, the earth is always there. That is why we say, "He came back to terra firma," the firm earth. We are happy to be back, even when we fly. Even though you have flown a million miles, or ten million miles, you are happy to land again and say, "Thank heavens I am back!" because this is stable, this is fixed, this is unmoving. In a sense, it represents the eternal. Therefore, in the Hindu pantheon we call it the Mother. The Mother is eternal. The connection with the mother is a permanent connection. It cannot be denied, it cannot be lost, it cannot be recreated. Nobody can have a second mother, because the connection between the mother and the child is something unique. Therefore, my Master used to say, "Take the Master in any way you like. Take him as your guru, take him as God, take him as father, brother, friend,

lover, anything. But above all, if you think of him as your mother, that gives surpassing blessedness."

So you see, we have to go to the source of all things. I remember when my son was five years old, he used to go with my father to the bank. My father used to take him, and draw money. So, whenever my father said, "I have no money," my son said, "Take me to the bank!" [laughter] He thought the bank was a source of money, not realising at the age of five that you cannot take out what you have not put in yourself. Now, that is a great piece of wisdom here to learn, that, in the material life, you get nothing more than what you put into it, even in human relationships.

Today's world is full of, what shall I say, imperfect relationships, frustrating relationships, unhappy relationships, heartbreaking relationships. Why? Because people are not willing to put anything into the relationship. They only want to take out all the time, killing the goose that lays the golden egg. You get married and you expect bliss. Have you **given** bliss? Have you ever tried to **give** to your partner in your marriage, or in your relationship with somebody else, your self? I am not talking of the body, of course. That is freely given, freely received, and freely thrown away. What you do not give, you never get. This is the law in spirituality. Give before you can receive. Give a little, receive a little. Give more, get more. Give all, get all! What is this 'all' that we have to give? The Self. Again, don't make the mistake of thinking I am talking of the lower self — this beautiful body, with all its beauties, latent or otherwise, embellished by modern high-tech cosmeticologies. We are not talking of that, and you know that.

Every woman, every man, knows that he has not given himself to anything on Earth, so far. If he or she had, we would not be here to speak of it, because the Self given — this Self has no place here — has no reason to stay here. It falls, it falls apart. "Dust thou art, to the dust thou shalt return." Fire to

fire, water to water, earth to earth, air to air, and so on, we are only repeating at the time of burial or cremation, consigning the elements, as if we have a right to consign them. We have no right to consign anything. The dead man has no rights. Nature takes care of the redistribution of the elements that went into the making of this body.

What we have a right over is the Self in me. Each one of us has an inviolable, sacred, divine right over the Self within us, because it is divine. How do I derive this right? I derive it from my Self. If we talk of God-given authority, I do not believe in it. God does not give any authority. From whence will he give? He is everywhere. From where will he take, and to whom will he give? If God is all-pervasive, everywhere at all times, there can be no giving and taking. You do not jump into a river, and say, "I am taking water from this river, and putting back into the river again." That is childishness. Take a cup and pour water — children do it. Take a cup and go on repeatedly taking a cup of water and throwing it back into the river or, like one of my young friends recently in Denmark, he went fishing and caught fish and threw them back into the river. I don't know why. What fun did he get, in catching the fish and throwing it back into the river?

This is what is pervading our life today. Take a woman in your life, and put her back into the stream of life. Take a man into your life, and throw him back into the stream of life. Bring a car in your life, and put it back into the wastepaper basket. We don't keep anything that we have today. What should we keep? Because, every day the model is changing, especially in this society, the American society. A car is old before it comes out of the manufacturer's *godown* [warehouse]. I heard that if you drove a car around for ten miles to test it and put it back, and wanted to sell it back, you lost a couple of thousand dollars already!

Now, we cannot play with human beings like we play with automobiles. We cannot use them, and throw them back,

and say, "I don't like this model. Give me another one." We don't shop for human beings. They are not returnable objects. If a human being is not shoppable or returnable, just at the whim and fancy of the buyer, how can you shop for God? How can you return him? Where will you put him back? [balloon pops] I don't know if God says such a person should be shot! [laughter] But you know, these are real questions you should ask yourself. From where will I get God? Where does He go when I don't need Him? Can I ever send Him away — He that is my Self, the prime mover of my existence, without whom I cannot even breathe.

So you see, this idea of getting God, going to God — all that is, shall I say, the kindergarten of spirituality: religion. My Master said, "Where religion ends, spirituality begins." The place of religion is to give us some idea of an ethical and a moral living, inculcate in us ethical and moral values, inculcate in us ideas of a brotherhood, a common human brotherhood in which we all participate, notwithstanding our political assóciation or heritage, notwithstanding our cultural heritage, notwithstanding the colour of our skin, notwithstanding the differences of sex. There is only one common brotherhood.

These are the things that religion is supposed to inculcate in us. It is a kindergarten for our education. Subsequently, we graduate into the spiritual school, where, having now matured into the ideas of a common brotherhood, a common humanity, the need for love and understanding, we try to nurture and develop those qualities within ourselves, using the seed that is latent in our heart, using the services of someone who can awaken that dormant seed.

So you see, right understanding of spirituality is necessary to know what you are doing here. It is not enough to say, "Oh, we go there and meditate, Chari, and it was wonderful!" We do not meditate to feel wonderful. There are occasions we will feel miserable after meditation. When shall

we feel miserable? When we have touched the core of our heart, and found there the home from which I have divorced myself, excluded myself, thrown myself out of my own home, and recreated in my heart the longing to get back into that home from which I have come — the protection, the divine love, the companion, the eternal companion who has always been waiting for me, which at the moment when my meditation breaks and I am back in this waking consciousness, I feel divorced from once again. We shall all weep at such occasions. It is inevitable. Tears will flow. It does not mean it was a bad meditation. It means it was a transcendentally good meditation.

In spirituality, as in nature, things which appear bad are good, and things which appear good are generally not really good. You all know from common experience that most medicines are bitter. Why on earth did not God make sweet medicine and why are sweet things generally bad for us? Chocolate is bad, ice cream is bad. I mean, is God a fool to make sweet things bad and bitter things good for us? He says, "Be wise. Don't go by the taste of things. Don't go by the appearance of things. Look for the inner value." See? Therefore, He put it as something out of reach of the fool, but available to the wise. In another way, I think it is His compassion that He has made things in this way, so that the rich take all that is stupid and wasteful, thinking it is the best. And the poor get all that the rich leave behind. Who goes for the bitter things of life? But the poor are very happy to have them. They are, at the same time, food and medicine for them. For us, we need food and medicine. For them, their food is medicine.

So you see, I think it is one of the aspects of Divine mercy, Divine compassion, that the essential things of life have been made bitter and given to the poor, and said, "Don't worry. This you shall always have. They need food and medicine. They need houses and comfort. They need a bedroom and mattresses and air conditioning. You can have

this bitter thing and be at peace anywhere." Now, the wise man looks for this. He tries to find it. He tries to go beyond the bitterness, the un-sweetness of things, to the core, which is manifest goodness, manifest divinity.

Therefore, we are taught in spirituality to rise beyond qualities. Don't be mislead by appearances. Don't seek the good, because where the good is, bad is. Where the beautiful is, ugliness is there. Where there is richness in a society, there is poverty in that same society. Where there are palatial buildings, there are ghettos. Try to strike a balance in your living — no good, no bad. What is divine, what is truth, what is natural? **That** alone shall help you to find that which is good, natural, divine in you.

So, the demands of spirituality, to rise above sensual pleasures, tastes, judgemental opinions, is not something to curb your freedom. It is to make you more free. If I am prejudiced towards someone, I am a slave of my prejudice. I suffer more than the person against whom I am prejudiced. I am more afraid. If I am free of prejudice — I am the free person, I have no more any problems. Every fear, every prejudice, is a trap into which we entrap ourselves

You are not doing good, for instance, to a black man by saying, "Oh, I love black people." The moment you say, "I love black people," you are still conscious of blackness and whiteness. Where is colour? And, if black is so bad, why do white women go and waste hundreds of dollars on tanning? I mean, think over it. So, colour consciousness does not mean only being conscious and rising above that, and saying, "No, no, there are no blacks, there are no blacks." That's not the way, not being conscious of difference, because in me there is no more any consciousness of any difference, even between God and the devil.

Remember what the Christian theology says, that the devil was nothing but an angel, and that poor angel fell and became sad. So, what creates devils? God does not create

devils. It is absurd to think God would create a devil to tempt us or to take us away from the path. Anyone who falls can become a devil. The higher you rise, the greater the fall. If you are falling from the human stature, you only become a fallen human. Not much to worry about when you fall; you can always get up and walk again. But the higher you rise, the fall is more and more miserable, more and more, what shall we say, disastrous, until, if an angel falls, it becomes nothing less than a devil. So, what is a devil? It has the potential to become an angel again. So, why are we afraid of the devil and craving for angels?

So you see, prejudices have to be cast out, fear has to be cast out. Cast out from where? Not from others. I am too familiar with psychotherapists, who are themselves terrified of the darkness, trying to teach their patients how not to be afraid of the dark, and I am often puzzled why a therapist has to go to another therapist every year, or every two years, and receive therapy himself!

So you see, all these problems are there before us when we think of what exists today. No wonder the old adage says, "Physician, heal myself." What does that mean? It means don't preach until you have perfected yourself, most of all in the spiritual field. That is what we call 'becoming an example' — not preaching and then going and smoking. Like a doctor who comes to your house or you go to his clinic and he says, "My friend, you are found to have cancer," and he is puffing away all the time, and you ask him, "What about you, Doc?" and he says, "Don't worry about me, you are the patient!" [laughter]

So, in spirituality we are all aspiring to that glorious transcendental situation: God in divinised human life. And perforce, on this voyage we have each one to become an example in our own living, which others can follow. It is like travelling together, and you exchange notes. "How to get to Orlando?" and he says, "Oh, you get off in St. Louis, and

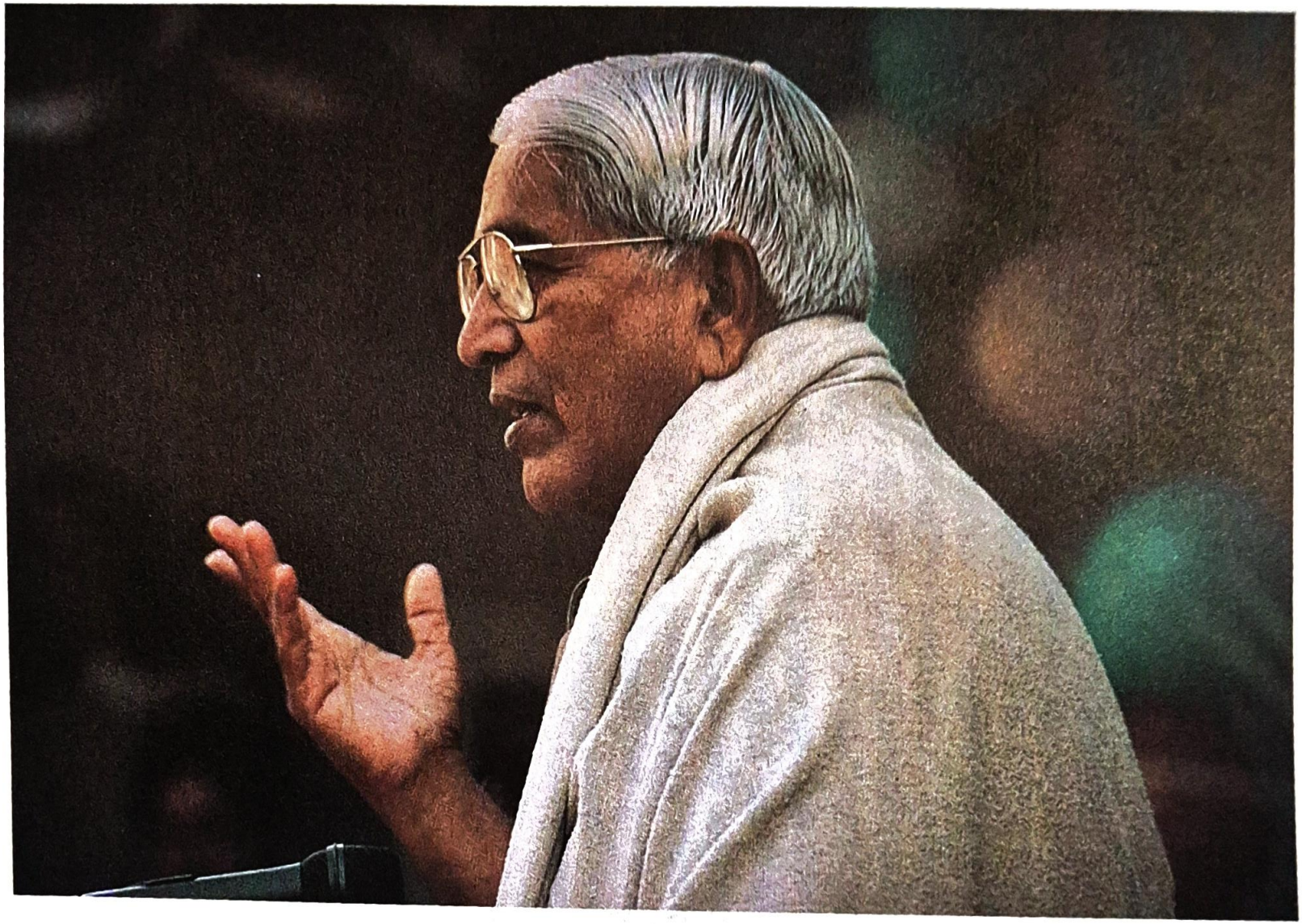
change onto this flight." You are already a guide by virtue of having travelled. One who travels must not only travel, but must be prepared to help others to travel. That is a guide. If you think you are going to be a spiritual person only for yourself, in yourself, by yourself, it will not be possible. Selfishness, even in the material world, is un-permissible. Selfishness in the spiritual world will not be tolerated by He who is pervading us. Therefore you have this magnificent heritage of ours where Christ was supposed to have fed a multitude with two loaves and five fishes. It is not to be taken as a real episode. It is to be taken as the value of spirituality where, having nothing, you can give everything.

After all, what is it we have in our hearts? The cynic will say, "Blood." But the human will say, "Love." The spiritual person will say, "God." What we have, we give. And what we have depends on what we think we have. Thinking makes it possible for us to do what nothing else can do. "There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so," Shakespeare says. If I think I am a fool, I am a fool. If I think I am poor, having the wealth of this universe in my hands, I am still a poverty-stricken individual. He who thinks he has nothing, has nothing, though he may be a millionaire. "No, no, Chari, I cannot give a donation." "Why not? You have twenty-seven million." "Yes, but look at the way the prices are going up. Inflation is going up. You know, if I had twenty-seven million thirty years back, it was real money. By jove, I could have done something with it. But today, what is twenty-seven million worth?" And there you have a beggar, begging for more and more: twenty-seven to fifty-four, to five-forty, to fifty-four thousand millions, and he is still miserable, still unhappy, still insecure, and you have to laugh at such a person and say, "What is it that you are aspiring for? What is it that, having which, you still feel you have nothing?" And, on the other side you have the spiritual man who, having nothing, has everything.

It is to this search that we are dedicated. To possess that nothingness which shall give us everything. And what is that nothingness? It is our definition of God. He is no person, He is no place, He is no thing. There are no qualities, there is not even power there, but from which everything comes. There is a famous example of the search, in a material way, of a young man who went to his guru, the *rishi*, and said, "Can you tell me something about life?" He said, "Young man, go to that fig tree and bring me a fruit." He brought him a fruit. He said, "Cut it. What do you see?" He said, "Some seeds in a lot of pulp." He said, "Take out one seed. What is it you now see?" He said, "One seed." "Cut it. What do you see inside?" He said, "Nothing." He said, "From this nothing, that tree has come up."

So you see, it is to that nothingness in us, which we call the Self, with a upper-case 'S', capital 'S', to which we address our search, to which we address our inquiry, before which we, shall we say, supplicate, and say, "Oh, my Self, give me the wisdom of my Self."

Thank you.



37

TALK TO NEW ABHYASIS

Atlanta, Georgia, USA
3 October, 1992

The only thing that should be of any interest to an abhyasi in Sahaj Marg is to get sittings. Because the more we talk the more confusion we create, and whatever we need to know is in the books. If you don't understand the books, please write to me, because the more you talk with preceptors, the more confused again! [laughter] Yes, because each one — you know, I have people who believe that to an American we must talk in American English, in the American way. I don't believe in changing the teaching to suit the people. The purpose of a teaching is to change the people to suit the teaching, not the other way around. Isn't it?

So, if you are going to change the teaching and say, "Oh, the Americans won't accept this, the Germans won't accept that, the French won't accept this," then where is the teaching? It is not something fanciful which we can convert according to local culture, local tolerances. It is something you accept or you don't accept. It is like Christianity. You can't have a Christianity for Indians, Christianity for Chinese...

Today, Christianity is a failure because we have changed this and that.

We are going to have a sitting in any case, so no children, please.

So: one teaching for all the people of the world, one method for all the people of the world. The system is not universal because we can convert it. You know, today we can find electrical converters which can fit any electrical system in the world. That is a different sort of fitness. Here, the fitness is that the system will make all people into something which they have to become. We may be anything when we start with it, but what we have to become is the same for all the peoples of the world. So, the method is the same. Like penicillin is the same everywhere.

Once you accept that, whatever you wish to know about the system you can read from the books of my Master; there is no problem. If you have any problem, write to me. I am open to receiving letters, answering letters. But please, only serious questions, because I have a lot of mail, and don't be upset if I don't reply because, as my Master used to say, the reply is a **solution** to a problem, not an **answer** to a problem.

So, if you write something, watch for results, not wait for a reply. Something written on paper is not really an answer, you see, it is only a response. We want an answer in the way of action which changes your life in the way that you wish it to progress.

Okay? Please sit down, we are going to have a sitting.

38

My Master, My Mission, My Method

Molena, Georgia, USA
4 October, 1992

Well, I am happy this ashram is here in Atlanta, what we call Molena, but outside India we say Atlanta ashram, like we say American ashram. But, as you zero in on America from abroad, the focus gets narrower and narrower, naturally. USA becomes Georgia, Georgia becomes Atlanta, Atlanta becomes Molena, Molena becomes Buzzard Hill.

Now, the people around this ashram must assume responsibility for the maintenance of this ashram. I hope all of you will. Or, are there some persons who don't want to do it? You don't want to do it? Why? No, this girl. Eh? You want to, or you don't want to? "I want to!" That's what I am saying! But when I said... [laughter] Because, this is a big thing. It is a big investment, and you have all contributed to it. It is your ashram. It is in America. It doesn't belong to the Indians or to the Americans, or to anybody. It belongs to **all** seekers.

So, every one of you must help. It is no use saying, "There is a pair of caretakers here; they will look after it." That is not nice, that is not correct, that is not, if you don't

mind my using a harsh word, moral. Every one of us is morally responsible, by the fact that we have donated towards this ashram. Like when you donate blood for a patient, you like to know whether that patient has survived or not, whether he is better or not, because my blood is flowing through him now. Isn't it? This is the principle of children. Why are we responsible for our children? Because our blood is flowing in our children. They carry our genes and our chromosomes. They are us. Toys-R-Us, they are us! [laughter] So, this is a sort of a Toys-R-Us, they are us, this is **me**, for every one of us.

This is **my** ashram. My Master used to say, "My Master, my Mission, my method." If these three — even if one is lacking, that abhyasi is incomplete. I see the tragedy of this when I come to the West. I often make the mistake, you know, being an Indian, and a stupid one at that, that when a man and a woman come along with children and say, "These are our children, Chari." I say, "How are you, Mrs. Clarke, or Mrs. Powell," and she says, "Oh, I am not Mrs. Clarke. This child is by my previous husband." I made this *faux pas* recently in London. I was staying with a lady who is a preceptor of the Mission, and she has two children, and she has three husbands! Now, one husband came along to the flat to talk about Sahaj Marg. So I said, "Mr. So-and-so..." He said, "I'm not Mr. So-and-so!" I said, "But you are the father of these children." He said, "That's right, but I am not Mr. So-and-so. They are my and this lady's children, but she is now married to another man, whose name she bears." You see the confusion.

So, my Master — one. My Mission — one. My method — one. This is the right approach for spirituality, not because the Master, the Mission, and the method need you, but you need them. I mean, hospitals are built because we need hospitals! Isn't it? The hospital doesn't need us. It would be very inane to say, "Yes, but Chari, without patients, wouldn't the hospital fail?" Good! If, in a country, hospitals fail for lack

of patients that is a good society. A society in which more and more hospitals have to be constructed is not a good society; it is not healthy, it is growing sicker and sicker. The ideal society would be where there are no hospitals, no police stations. But, we don't live in such ideal societies.

So, the third thing comes in: the ashram. One for regulatory control — the police, they are supposed to maintain law and order. Not force, not to shoot down people, but to maintain law and order. One to cure sick people, then here, as you would have seen in the play yesterday [about a cobbler], for souls — s-o-u-l-s.

So, it is your need which we try to fulfil here, through sadhana, through practise, through education. When you feel the need, you come here. Now if you feel the need, you must stick to one thing. Every dietician knows that you should not eat twenty-six things at lunch — mono-diet, they call it nowadays. That's carrying it too far, in my opinion. But let us say, simple diet, not conflicting with each other, not pickles and almonds and sweets and sauerkraut and, you know, the whole bag of tricks — in the stomach there is warfare.

So, we have one Master, one Mission, one method, as a very necessary prerequisite. You cannot be in this Mission and have a Master outside and say, "Oh, I follow Buddhism, but Chari, I like to come and meditate here, because I feel so nice." Nor can you have a Mission somewhere else, and come and meditate here, because, this is a violation of the basic, shall we say, moral requirement. Like when you marry, you have the body, the mind and the soul of your partner. Here also, it is a sort of a spiritual marriage. You have the body, the mind, and soul of the Mission. The body is the Mission itself, the mind is the teaching, the soul is the Master. This is the aspect of Sahaj Marg that I would like to emphasize to all of you, because often I get letters: "Can I go and do this? Because I find relaxation there." My Master used to say, "There is no better relaxation than meditation here, in the

Sahaj Marg system." Anybody who has done it properly will see that they get absorbed, they get lost. When the sitting is over, some of them are weeping and they say, "Why on earth did you close the sitting? It was so wonderful." I mean, the proof of the pudding is in the eating of it. Now, if after this, you want some other form of relaxation, or you bring in your cultural heritage and say, "Well, in our culture, you know, we have a glass of wine in the evenings!" Culture has nothing to do with this. We have to change our culture. We have to bring in a new culture. When humanity has to change, it means everything has to change.

In one sense, we have to un-become everything. It is not a way of something being built. It is a way of everything being removed, which we call cleaning. But cleaning is not only what is here, but it is what is here, too, and what is here, too — the environment. So, it is a total concept. Sahaj Marg is a total concept. It is not something, that I do this and I come here for this and I go to a third person for that. If you want total success, there must be total acceptance. If there is no total acceptance, anything that you achieve will only be partial; then there is no use blaming the Master and the Mission and the method. So, any of you who are serious, I hope all of you are, you must kindly ponder over what I am saying and make it possible for yourself to accept these things, these prerequisites for total success.

Discipline! What is discipline but a way of life? Discipline is not something which is enforced on you. You see, there are two ways of discipline. One is regulatory, official discipline. "Drive on the right. Follow the speed limit. Don't enter, and no entry, etc." These are regulatory, imposed restrictions which you have to, willy-nilly, obey. You have no choice. People confuse this with a different sort of obedience which must come from inside, out of recognition that, if I do not follow this discipline, I shall lose my way. Very much like if you don't follow the road signs you are losing your way. There have been occasions in the dark when we have lost our

way and we have to circle around for forty miles before we find the way again — fifty miles, sixty miles, who knows? So, discipline says, "Stick to the way. Follow the rules." For whose benefit? For your benefit.

Now, what are the disciplines that we have to follow? There are, of course, physical disciplines, there are mental disciplines, there are moral disciplines. Now, the moment we talk of discipline, people say, "Aha! Christianity all over again, the church all over again." That all religions talk of discipline, doesn't make discipline a religion. That everybody eats bread, doesn't make everybody a white man! Though originally, the white man may have eaten bread. Today, everybody eats bread. Isn't it?

We must understand that the real discipline comes from an inner recognition of the need to affirm in myself a particular code for myself, established by myself, for myself. It is not an imposition — we only suggest. You have to make this discipline possible within yourself, by yourself, for yourself.

Therefore, in Sahaj Marg we don't have this idea of punishment and reward. Punishment for what? Reward for what? You do and you achieve. You do the wrong way, and you fall. It is no retribution, it is no punishment. It is a consequence of a certain trend or a course of activity. If I jump from the roof, I am going to break my leg at the least. Whose fault is it? "Oh, if there was a God, he should have protected me!" Well, God doesn't care to do foolishness. He says, "Well, if there is a need for protection, if you are in a situation where you cannot help yourself," then you can invoke His grace, His mercy, His power, His protection. But wilfully, if I do harm to myself, it is my action which hurts me, not somebody else's. So you see, what to do with God? Eventually, you will find, that if you pursue this path long enough, think about it long enough, you will find you become

the master of your destiny. God, more or less, doesn't enter the picture at all.

I think, personally, that is a weakness to invoke God. I will invoke God only when I am not capable of doing something. When I am really not capable of something, when it is beyond human capacity, then comes divine capacity. My Master has put this very beautifully when he said, "You don't use a crane to pick up a needle from the floor." It is a matter of utilization of energy, conservation of energy. We must understand that this is not something arcane, something philosophic. It is a principle of conservation of energy, that what I am doing must be used with the minimum energy that is required, not the maximum energy that is required, because maximum can be anything. It can be infinite! As they say, it is like using a machine gun to shoot a fly! You may be able to do it, though it could be difficult. To shoot a fly with a machine gun is not easy, but it is foolish. I remember I saw one movie, *Karate Kid* or something, where a fellow catches a fly with his chopsticks and he says, "Can you do that?" And a new abhyasi there, you know, he takes up a pair of chopsticks and catches a fly! And he says, what does he say? "Beginner's luck!" The guru is disgusted! He says, "Beginner's luck," and walks away. [laughter]

So, these principles... You know, I called you here for a different purpose, but I feel obliged to talk to you because a right understanding in the beginning is necessary for any pursuit. I have known couples who get married and after three months they say, "Oh, but if I had known this, I would not have married this blighter." So, there must be a frank exchange of possibilities and necessities. Given this possibility, what is necessary? And, if it is necessary, why is it necessary? Is it necessary because I say so? Or is it necessary because you have to do it to achieve what you want.

You know, like potatoes have to be cooked. Husband is hungry. He says, "Where are those damn potatoes?" You say,

"Honey, they're cooking!" And he says, "How long?" "Well, as long as it takes!" You can't prod a potato into being cooked. It takes its time. Isn't it? Seven minutes, eight minutes, ten minutes in the pressure cooker it has to take, and the husband has to wait patiently. If you are a wise wife, you give him something to do! [laughter] "Honey, why don't you peel this next batch of potatoes." Something like that. I mean, we have always to keep our mind occupied. Because, as they say, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." There is no devil in it. The devil is our own lower self. It says, "Why not go out for a drive? Why not have a beer and some sandwiches outside while the dinner is cooking?" Now, this is foolish, because when you come back your dinner is going to be wasted. "No, no, but I am terribly hungry." Well, wait seven minutes. You'll be a little more hungry, and enjoy your food better. Isn't it?

So, the devil in us is the negative tendencies in us, formed by us in past. They surface when the mind is inactive. Therefore, the technique of constant remembrance, because if your mind is continuously occupied, the tendencies cannot act. The divine in us is the other side of the coin. When we meditate, we awaken the sleeping fellow inside, and say, "What have you been doing, my dear friend?" He says, "You have put me to sleep; what can I do? I used to whisper to you, I used to talk to you, I used to laugh with you, but you never listened. So I have toned down, toned down, toned down, until today, even when I whisper, it is so soft that perhaps I don't hear it myself." So, the voice of the conscience, which is nothing but the divine voice in me, which is **my** inner voice, is silent, because I never listen to it. So, we have to re-awaken that. And, once you awaken it, you have got to listen to it. This is the thing which tells you, now, what you have to do and what you have not to do.

Therefore, I said, discipline must come from within. Now, if you don't listen to that, it will lapse into silence again, and everything is, you have to begin all over again. So you

see, it's very necessary, first, to listen to whoever you have chosen as your guide. Let him help you to awaken the voice inside, which has become silent, which has lapsed almost beyond, you know, the possibility of being awakened. And when it is awakened and begins to speak to you, listen. Listen for what? Listen to obey!

So, the obedience is now of your own inner convictions, your inner conscience, and if you don't do it, you will not be in spirituality after that. It may take, I don't know, thousands of years, as Babuji said, till the chance comes again for somebody to awaken that. So you see, the possibilities are infinite, in the immediate present. If that is lost, the possibility is put back, to who knows when we don't know.

Now, to achieve all this, we have these ashrams. They are not built for fun, they are not built for holidays, they are not built to be, you know, edifices to be admired by people. They are meant to be lived in, used for the right purpose, in which you can grow spiritually. Therefore, we have to protect these things in two ways: the material way and the spiritual way. The material way is obvious. Keep the plumbing going, keep the water supply going, replace rusted roofs and bolts and nuts, see that nobody desecrates it, nobody destroys it. The spiritual way is, to only do what is to be done in an ashram, so that the atmosphere created here is preserved. When you come next time, you must feel the atmosphere. It is a palpable thing. You can almost touch it.

So, you have two duties. The material protection of this place, wonderful place, beautiful place. If you want to keep it wonderful and beautiful, you have to maintain it that way. If you have to keep it as an ashram, and not just as a motel or a hotel, you have to keep the spiritual atmosphere pure, unsullied. Now, you are the local group. Obviously, I mean, it's your baby. We all share in this job. Now, I could have stayed in India, and said, "An Atlanta ashram, for heaven's sake. Why should I go there?" My job can be done from

wherever I am. Your job cannot be. Why do people have to come here to these seminars? Because, what I can do from where I am, you cannot do except from here, while I am here.

So, in future, if there is a possibility, please exercise that choice to be here, and not elsewhere. Because, again, it is your benefit that is at stake. One more or one less, hundred more or hundred less — to me it doesn't matter. If there is nobody here, I have a week's holiday. As Bill said yesterday, or he implied, I will go shopping again, till I waste all my money. Or go to Chattanooga, or to some lake, and have a picnic. I am a happy man. But, you must keep me busy. It is your business to keep me busy.

In Europe, I made a statement, that every abhyasi is my boss. But I am not anybody's servant. Now, you should try to figure this out yourself. Because, my Master said, "Service without servility." We serve, but we are not servants. So, when I serve somebody, automatically he is my boss. I said, I have few bosses now. I would wish everybody to be my boss. See, you all want to be bosses. I want more and more bosses in my life. I would be happy, if all of the four and a half, or six billion people of this world were my bosses. Because that means they are taking my service! That is what I am here for.

That is my final appeal to you. Involve yourself in the protection of this beautiful place. Protection, not in the sense of protecting from this and that, but protecting its beauty, its grandeur, spiritual grandeur, its inner spiritual sanctity, because without an idea of sanctity and holiness — this is something very deplorable in Western countries, and more especially in America, that the idea of holiness is no more there. That something should not be walked upon, you cannot sit at some places, you should stand up when somebody comes. Older people should be given the sofas, not the younger people. Younger people may have back pains, but then they should still suffer that pain, and sit on the floor. See, these finer aspects of an etiquette, which highlights a society's

culture, are sadly lacking in your society. Now, I don't mean to imply, you know, that the Indian is any better. But, you cannot be better because somebody else is worse! That is a comparative betterness or a worseness.

You must be good in yourself. You must build a culture which is again reminiscent of former glory. That there is respect for the old, that there is respect for the women, there is love for the children. That we respect certain places. After all, people go to, I don't know, Israel, and worship at the Mount. And before the Wailing Wall, where Jesus is supposed to have walked, the place where he walked. You have edifices put up for your past presidents. I mean, if a mere president of a country has an edifice costing a hundred million dollars put up, and every paper that he signed or received going into the archives of the nation, don't you think something spiritual is worth much more effort, and much more sacred, and much more of future value? This idea you should try to cultivate, and with the recognition of human dignity, the human person, whether male or female, whether black or white, whether tall or short, whether child or old man.

This idea of holiness cannot be recreated. It is very necessary. You worship God, God doesn't need your worship. God never said, "Worship me." That was Moses who said it, and I don't know whether Moses heard right — perhaps not. Who knows? But, there is an automatic reverence that awakens in us, in India at least, I don't know about here. When I see my teacher, even when I see the worst teacher that I can think of — he was yet my teacher, he contributed to my elevation — mental, intellectual. I have to bow before him, even today, when I see him! And my teacher says, "No, no, no, you are leading thirty thousand people, I must bow before you," we go into this tangle, you know, who should bow before whom, but it's nice! It's like the trouble between husband and wife: who should kiss whom first? The husband complains, "You never give me a kiss." The wife says, "But,

honey, it's always you who should give me a kiss." It is a matter of, you know, a loving tussle.

But, this idea of the holiness of a human being, essentially, because there is in him, that which is holy, without which we would not be here. That which, with me, is my divine presence. If I nourish it, and make it grow and grow, the presence becomes a person, it becomes a personality. How does a man become wise? By imbibing education, by imbibing wisdom — not just intelligence.

So, this respect must become something natural. Then you will find all these problems of colour prejudice, racial prejudice, sex prejudice — everything goes. Because, how can you destroy somebody, just because he is of a different colour, seeing that there is God in him, or whatever you call God, or divinity, in him? You are killing yourself, because that same thing is in me which is activating me and moving me. And when the same thing is in him, how can I have anything but respect? Because, if I don't respect him, it means I don't respect myself. Self-respect comes only through respecting the other. One who has no self-respect destroys everything. One who is angry in himself is angry with everybody, he projects his anger on all. One who hates himself projects hate everywhere. Therefore, in meditation, we try to rectify ourselves. And when we change the inner situation to such an extent that, well, I am no longer warring with myself, then I don't war with anybody outside myself. When I am able to look inside and say, "Aha! There is this in me, and I see it in you," automatically I will bow before you. It is not a matter of superiority and inferiority. It is not a matter of respect, even. It is a recognition of the divinity in others that is in me.

So you see, all these values you have to re-foster in your society, and I hope that all of you will be instruments for this change, which America needs very badly. There is no use, you know, talking of the greatness of America. Material greatness is not the greatness that we should seek. We have seen greater

empires of the past. We have seen the Greek, we have seen the Babylonian, we have seen, I don't know how many, the Roman. At the height of their greatness they perished. Why? Because moral values were thrown off, there was no respect for human dignity, there was no respect for human person, anybody could be used or misused at will — and they fell.

So you see, there is a very urgent need for you, here in America, to correct yourselves, to help others to change, so that this beautiful country can continue to be great. Its greatness is your future. Your future is its greatness! No country is great, just because it has, I don't know, a Madison Avenue and a Fifth Avenue, and a Rockefeller Institute. If its people are stupid, the nation is stupid. If its people are wealthy, the country is a wealthy country. If the people are spiritual, it is a spiritual country. What is America? It is another, you know, continent! Why is South America not praised?

So, we must bring into this great land of yours a true greatness, surpassing the merely material and glamorous greatness of today. To look at America, and say it has wonderful roads, wonderful intersections, all beautifully numbered, to my mind is not enough. I can find my way in the dark, anywhere I choose to go. I don't need roads, I don't need road signs. After all, when you fly, you have no roads and road signs. We must learn to fly!

Beautiful malls? Yes, of course. I am fascinated by them. But I can get by without them. I go there because they are there. Beautiful scenic country? Well, come to India. I can show you enough of it. So, what is the greatness that we are seeking to re-bring, or re-create? The lost values of a past civilization, a true culture, which means, a pervasive dignity for everyone, a pervasive respect for everything, a pervasive respect for life, understanding that a deer is as much a living thing as a dear one. And then you will see — violence goes,

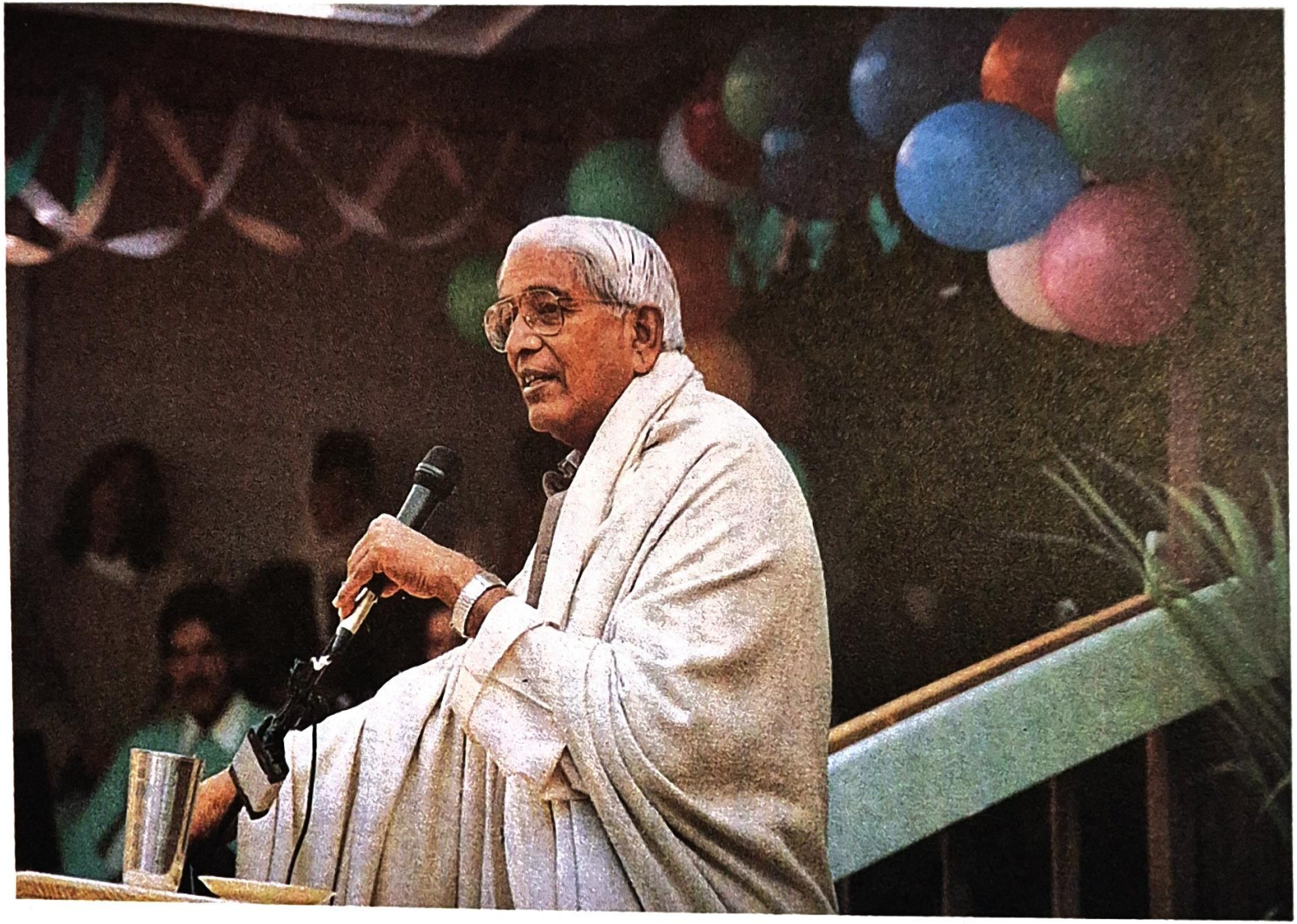
love comes in its place; disrespect goes, respect comes in its place; disharmony goes, harmony comes in its place.

So, I must repeat, every one of you has to participate in this glorious adventure, not only for yourself, but when you are capable enough, to pass on this possibility to others.

As you know, we are a system which does not interfere with religion. We are beyond religion. That's why we have so many people here. We are beyond colour, we are beyond race, we are beyond everything. Let us try to keep it that way. Don't have any prejudices left in your minds. Wash them out. The cleaning process is fantastic. It is totally effective. Anytime you have a problem, sit down, meditate, clean! And you will see, in a very fantastically short time, things change.

We have prejudices because we don't communicate. Prejudice becomes bigger and bigger, the longer the communication is delayed. Now, with whom should I really communicate to remove all possibilities of this? With my self! Because, the moment this is corrected, everything else is correct. But, if I try to talk to you, and talk to you, and talk to you, because I have problems with you, then the human interaction begins. "Yes, but why not this way, Bill?" "Yeah, but Chari, why not this way?" And this goes on for hours, you see. So, every time there is a problem, look within! It will show you how to do it. In most cases, it would have already done it. You understand?

So now, to conclude our meeting, I will suggest a sitting.



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REMOVE ALL BLOCKS

Molena, Georgia, USA
4 October, 1992

Don Sabourin: I have a multi-part question. How may all of us, as abhyasis, as your abhyasis, co-operate with you in the fullest with your work? As an extension of that, how may each preceptor, in addition to being an abhyasi and co-operating with your work, best serve you and serve the abhyasis who come to them? And thirdly, how may the centre-in-charge, who is also an abhyasi and a preceptor, best serve you, best serve your abhyasis, and best serve your preceptors? [pause, then laughter]

PR: I think the best way — only one answer for all three questions — is how you can help me to serve you better. And that is by removing all blocks between you and me. Now, these blocks are largely mental blocks, emotional blocks, psychological blocks, so they have to go. An abhyasi should not think that he or she is merely an abhyasi. They are seekers on the path. Abhyasi means, one who is practising the abhyas. But a devoted abhyasi, a dedicated abhyasi, a committed abhyasi — I am seeing that many of our abhyasis throughout

the world, you know, have remained abhyasis. Of course, many have not even been abhyasis because they don't practise. They are there, but they don't do the practice. So the first thing is to become a good practising abhyasi. Now for this, all that you need, whether you are a preceptor or an abhyasi or the centre-in-charge, is to be a good abhyasi. Practise the meditation and the evening cleaning and constant remembrance with all your heart. Develop! Because one who is not a good abhyasi can hardly be a good preceptor, and one who is not a good abhyasi and a good preceptor, could not make a good centre-in-charge.

So, the foundation is to be a good abhyasi in the sense of systematic, dedicated practise, committed to the practice, which means a commitment to your own progress. If this commitment is there, it automatically helps the Master to help you in every way. Now, lack of commitment is a negative thing, but there are positive barriers, such as not accepting the system totally, or doing this part here, something else somewhere. It is like a man who eats one slice of pizza in one restaurant, goes to another restaurant for some hash, third restaurant for some salad, fourth for some ice cream. They may be individually good, but they don't combine. Here, the system is a total system, and it does not permit intrusion from other systems.

So, people who want to grow in Sahaj Marg must practise Sahaj Marg totally. That means, practising the elements of Sahaj Marg and living as an abhyasi of the Sahaj Marg system, guided by the Ten Maxims. We are always talking of love, but we are always hating people — mutually. The more we talk of love, it means the more hatred there is in society. Obviously! Isn't it? The more we talk of raising standards of living, it means the standards are low. The more we say the need for speaking the truth, it means there are lies being told. So, I would like more of love and less of the talk of love.

Second is respect for the establishment. I mean, obviously, if you don't respect your Master you can't have a relationship with him, of a disciple and a Guru. Respect does not mean, here, coming like this, you know, hands and feet bound. It means an inner respect. It is like the law of gravity — water flows from above down below and generates electricity, but the above must be above, the below must be below for the water to flow. If both are at the same level, there is no flow.

So, you must be able to respect the man who is giving you, or the institution which is giving you, by being a receptacle capable of receiving that which is being allowed to flow into you. If you block that and say, "I have it already. Who is this guy? What is this institution?", nothing can flow into that vessel, which means the vessel must be open, not upside down. It must be open — straight up.

Kabir gives a beautiful illustration of this when he talks of one of these vessels we use for water in India, a pot. If it is floating straight, egoistically, it doesn't fill, but the more it bows, the more it fills, until it is so full it sinks into the water. Now there is water inside, there is water outside, there is no difference. So, this respect of being able to receive — that I am a recipient, he is the giver, I must love him, I must obey him, I must respect him — this must grow. Otherwise, it cannot be a relationship which will be fruitful in the long run.

Part of this is the preceptor, because on behalf of the man who gave him the permission to work, he is giving his time, his efforts, to the growth of the abhyasis. To that extent, there must be respect for the preceptors, not that we don't have to say, "Yes, sir! Reporting to you, sir!" [salutes] That is in the army. But a healthy respect — again, being governed by the fact that he is transmitting something to you from somewhere! This transmission is not only a transmission of something from one place to another, but is a transmission going **through** the preceptor, from somewhere to you. Like

you have transmitters — some transmit themselves, some allow transmissions to go through them, conductors. Now, if that is not allowed to be there, fit to perform its duty, the preceptor can do nothing. So, you must allow the preceptor to function in the most effective way to help you in your spiritual evolution.

The centre-in-charge is an administrative post. Somebody has to be the centre-in-charge. The fittest man, according to my guru, my Master, is the man who is also the highest elevated spiritually. I have often argued with him, that spiritually elevated people may lack administrative capacities, talents. He said, "If they have **this**, I can give them **that**." But having that alone is not enough. We know many managers, successful managers, directors, chairmen — it is no use. Here, we need to work with the heart **and** with the head. The combination makes a good manager.

So, it is the Master's choice who shall be the centre-in-charge. It is his business, because he uses the centre-in-charge to achieve the purpose for which the Mission exists in different countries. So, the centre-in-charge is, you may say, I won't use the word 'representative' because in Sahaj Marg it has a different connotation, but he is his alter-ego, you can say. So, you must listen to him, be guided by him. See? If I use the word 'obedience', you may not like it, but to be guided by, you see, there's nothing wrong. I see all over America tourist information bureaus, and when you go there that guy says, "Take this route and take exit number so-and-so, and get to this place. Flint River — beautiful site!" You are being guided by him. Now, if you don't follow his guidance, you are not going to get anywhere.

So, obedience is nothing more than following the advice of somebody who is well-intentioned towards you. Unfortunately, there is a mix-up between military type of obedience, government obedience where the obedience is imposed by force of authority — here you have to obey for

your sake, because the guidance is good for you and following the guidance will enhance your capacities and the possibility of your evolution. So, this is not a slavish obedience to authority, but it is a wise acceptance of a guidance, given by someone who is put in a position of guiding you. So, I don't see the difficulty.

And at the top of this pyramid is the Master himself. He is committed to your welfare — spiritual welfare. Let me make it clear: He has no axe to grind. In Sahaj Marg there are no compulsory payments of any sort. If you give, you give what you can, when you can, if you wish to. That we make appeals for funds does not mean that we are asking for funds. We are only placing before you a need, created by the need to fulfil your needs in your spiritual career. If you accept that all this funding business is to create institutions to fulfil your needs for spiritual life, you will see the whole thing of money raising as a different thing altogether than just talk, like the average American, and say, "Oh, this is fund-raising all over again. They say 'No money in Sahaj Marg' but they're asking for money all the time." Now, you are here in this ashram precisely because the donors made it possible. You are enjoying being here. You are profiting by being here. You are developing while you are here. Now, somebody made it possible — a group of persons, a large number of persons — they made it possible, so you should be grateful to your donors, too. That, even though I may not have given something, yet this exists because of them. You understand? Why not I also contribute whatever I can, whenever I can. Not today? Ten years hence, perhaps.

This idea of money coming between the Master and the method and the Mission should be abolished from your minds, because money is a necessary adjunct to all productive effort. Even if you want to dig, you need a spade, or a shovel, and you need money for that. If you are an acupuncturist, at least you have to buy the needles, and they don't come free.

Homeopathic medicine — it is the cheapest on earth, but even it costs something.

You know, one of these stories which impressed me very much when I was a boy — this beautiful lamp, Aladdin's lamp, which could bring out a genie when you rubbed it a particular way and recited something, and it would give you anything. Now, there was a law which said it could be sold only for a price less than that at which you had bought it. And each owner, after finding out how destructive was the power this lamp conferred upon him, tried to sell it. Well, the man who had bought it for a million dollars could sell it for nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand dollars, and it went on like that. Ultimately, one dollar was the price, then ninety-nine cents, ninety-eight cents, one cent. Now, the man who bought it for one cent could not sell it, because there is nothing lower than that in value. He was stuck with enormous powers, which he bought for one cent, and could not get rid of.

So you see, money's destructive aspect, money's constructive aspect. Money is only a force, a power. Money is not dirty. If it is used dirtily, it is dirty. Anything is dirty if you use it dirtily. I mean, if you spit on a painting by Picasso, who is the fool? The man who spits, or the Picasso painting? So, things can become venerable, because we venerate them. Some things are venerable whether you venerate them or not. Now, we have to understand this distinction quite correctly because you have a President of the United States who is elected into office, and he becomes an object of veneration, of admiration. But the people made him. But there are other things, like the beauty of nature, like God, which are venerable in themselves, by themselves. You don't venerate them and make them venerable. They are venerable, therefore you venerate.

So, what is a man-created venerable object, and what is by itself, self-created venerable object, you must understand very correctly, because if you don't understand this, human

respect, human dignity go out of the door. "He is another man like me, walking around in a pair of jeans. Why should I obey this fellow?" What do you expect, some sort of Martian monster, with six heads and seventeen tentacles, beeping at you like a computer?

So you see, when you understand this distinction, that this is it, by itself, not because I made it; whereas this is it because I made it, then the difference becomes quite clear. What is honourable, what is worshipable? The Chinese had this philosophy, but unfortunately I think they are also losing it, because this Occidental fashion to denigrate everything and claim equality has destroyed even the Eastern cultures, which is very unfortunate. It is the power of evil over good, to which we are all succumbing, in some measure or other. Now we have to reverse the flow in Sahaj Marg. How? By bringing back into your consciousness the ideas of goodness, of worth, of love, of the need to respect! Give respect and get respect. If you don't give respect, you get no respect.

So, these are very fundamental verities, which used to be living truths in our cultures, but today they have all been lost. Today, there is no respect, there is no receiving, but only grabbing. Yesterday, I heard at least six times, "It's up for grabs," an Americanism which means I don't know what. What it really means, I don't know. "It's up for grabs." So, the idea that you can take something without the giver wanting to give it to you is, to put it in very fundamental terms, rape. Rape is not only sexual rape. You rob a man, it is raping his money. You take away a man's food from his hand while he is eating, it is another form of rape. Rape is taking what is not given. Now, when you know he is giving and you are receiving, there is always something in your heart which says, "I am grateful to this guy." You may not express it, but let your heart express it. If you allow your heart to express it every time, you will find that your heart is changing, growing, and from gratitude comes love.

So, all these fundamental, cultural aspects of life, politeness, courtesy. See? There used to be a time, not long ago, when I would never see a man entering a room before a woman in the West. They would open the door for her. But today the man goes first and bangs the door in the face of the woman. In buses, if there was a woman standing, somebody would get up and allow the woman to sit. Today, a woman has two babies and a basket and they say, "Oh, she can stand." You see to what levels we have sunk, that even in the absolutely basic human values, we have allowed them to be corroded and eroded. The mistake, of course, is largely the female's also, because they claim an equality, and when they claim equality the man says, "Okay, you got it! Stand in the bus with your baby in your arms!"

So never claim equality. Try to **be** equal, manifesting the differences which God has given us. The black and white can never be equal in colour, because black will always be black, white will always be white. The white are trying their darned best, with all that Revlon and Lanvin can produce, to darken themselves, but they don't succeed. They only come out with sunburn, and the black is trying, now, his best with creams and whatnot, to lighten his complexion, and it's not working. In between the manufacturers are making all the money, and laughing their heads off, I am sure!

But in what way can the black man and the white man be equal? In his heart! Wherever you go in America, you have these M.L.K. Avenues — Martin Luther King. What did he do that you have so many avenues named after him? He was not a Nobel Prize winner, he was not a scientist, he was not an artist, he was not a musician. If, in a white man's land where racism prevails absolutely even today, a black man is honoured, why is he honoured? For something which they cannot help honouring — it was his heart, his compassion, his love. So, in this we can all be equal — man or woman, black or white, male or female, young or old, it doesn't matter.

Sahaj Marg gives us this beautiful opportunity of creating a humanity, or a human society, a world society in which all are equal by virtue of the fact that all have love in their hearts, manifest love in their hearts, work with love in their hearts, love with love in their hearts, because today nobody loves with love in the heart! Love is left at home. So, if you cannot work with love in the heart, speak with love in the heart, how are you going to love with love in the heart? So, all our talk of loving has become empty — physical rituals, in bed, out of bed. It's the same story.

I was just telling these girls about gifts. What is the psychology of gifts? Where there is no love, we substitute for it a gift! And what was the gift of the Magi? You know, I had recently an argument with a Catholic. I said the gifts of the Magi were their blessings to this child. I was bold enough to say the baby was not yet Christ, he was only born Jesus. The wise men of the East came, blessed him — a blessing means bestowing some divine capacity upon a child. In all your fairy tales, fairy stories, this is absolutely implicit, that the fairy comes, the godmother comes, and gives a blessing, which means not a gift wrapped up in something, but a capacity, a quality. So, the Jesus, baby Jesus, the infant Jesus, was blessed and with these blessings he was able to rise up to become the Christ. He was not Jesus Christ. He was Jesus the Christ, like Gautama the Buddha. There is no such thing as Mr. Buddha. There is no such thing as Mr. Christ. Christ is a situation, a position, a state of being. So was the Buddha; so is a Master. It is a state of being.

So, in Sahaj Marg we have this beautiful philosophy, that no one is born a Master, but **becomes** a Master. Avatars are born with all powers necessary. A Master is made here when a man who is willing to serve manifests and comes to the Guru's notice, and the Guru says, "Well, this guy is good. He will serve humanity without any consideration of the self." So, what is the essence, what is the secret of this love? Love must have no consciousness of self! Now every time we argue,

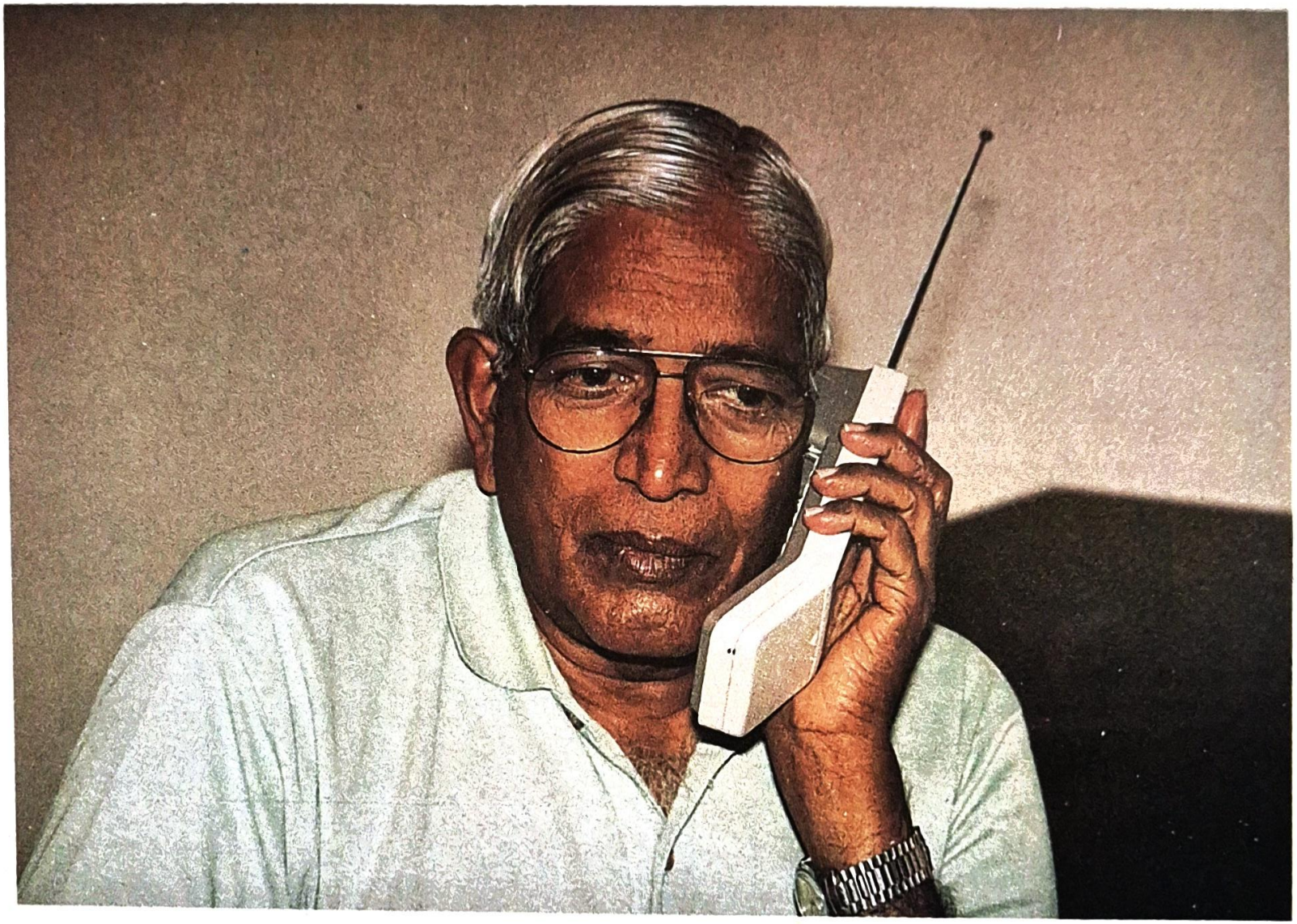
we fight, we quarrel, we are doing it from the point of view of the self. Every difference of opinion is a manifestation of the self, of the importance of the self. "No, no, I don't agree with you! Oh, I think it should be this way. It should have been that way." It's all a manifestation of the self. So, you don't have to judge, you don't have to look into the heart. We don't need spiritual capacity to know who is arrogant and proud. You can see it, openly, in their behaviour. Some people are arguing all the time. "Shall we have a banana for breakfast?" "Why not an apple?" "Okay, we shall have an apple." "No, no, go ahead, have a banana!" I get it every morning here, you see. "What shall we have for cereal?" — another argument. "Where shall we park the cars?" — a committee of three people to meet after satsangh and decide. Organization becomes necessary only because of the ego manifestations of people, each one clamouring for the work to be done in their way, not necessarily in the good way. The wise man keeps silent. When all this clamour has subsided, like my Master, he says, "Let us do it!" and then everybody says, "Do what?" He says, "What you have been discussing." "But we haven't found a solution, Master." "I will give it to you."

So you see, the wise voice speaks last. All the clamour and clutter, this argumentation, strife — this must stop! It will stop only when people give up their egoistic hold on their own self-opinions. "I think, therefore it must be the right way." It's a pity that famous philosopher laid the foundation for this arrogance, when he said, "*Cogito, ergo sum.*" I think, therefore I am. A wise man would have said, "I am, therefore I think." I mean, if I do not exist, how can I think? So today, thinking has become something very sacred to the Occidental mind. "Oh, I think, ah, Chari, that, ah..." So leave it! Leave administration. Your job as abhyasis, whether you are the centre-in-charge, or a preceptor, or the secretary of the Mission or anything else — you are all abhyasis — your job as an abhyasi is to go on the march to self-perfection. Do it!

And in the process you will become better preceptors, better centre-in-charge, better everything.

So, this is my answer to your three questions, in one answer. Thank you.

(Meeting with Canadian abhyasis.)



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USA Board of Directors Meeting

Molena, Georgia, USA
6 October, 1992

I call the meeting to order, and I am grateful to the American branch of Shri Ram Chandra Mission for inviting me here to inaugurate your ashram and to stay a few days under the most comfortable and affectionate environment. I hope this Mission will maintain the ashram and its environment in a very fit and suitable way and that the Mission will increasingly serve human beings in the spiritual field. I hope the abhyasis of the Mission will co-operate and make their needs known to the Board of Directors through the secretary so that the Mission can increasingly fulfil the spiritual needs of aspirants in this great country.

To fulfil these aims, I am going to make some changes in the constitution of the Board of Directors and the Trustees, as they are called. First of all, I am abolishing the post of treasurer because I do not see a need for it. What does a treasurer do? Nothing. A treasurer is one who should handle finances, bank it, send it here and there, account for it, etc. And here in our Mission the secretary has been fulfilling this.

So, I am abolishing the post of treasurer and reducing the number on the board to five.

If you have no objection, I will continue to be the President [laughter] and I propose to retain Mr. Kamlesh Patel as Vice President and Mr. William Waycott as centre-in-charge of the U.S., Santosh Khanjee as secretary and Madhava Reddy as auditor. You accept, all of you? And now, in place of this abolished post of treasurer I am thinking of appointing an assistant secretary, who will not enjoy the powers of the secretary or any of the powers of the constitution, but will co-ordinate with the secretary and govern the work of the Mission, guide its working on the eastern seaboard. I propose Mr. John Barlow to this post. Any objections?

So please make a note: President — P.R., Vice President — Kamlesh Patel. This comes into effect immediately. C & C (commander in chief), Secretary — Santosh Khanjee, Assistant Secretary — John Barlow, and auditor — Madhava Reddy. So, we restore the board of directors to six. Now trustees: Brian Jones, I wish to retain Chinu Sreenivasan, V. Kannan, Bill Lakics. We have four, we need one more. Do you have any proposals?

Q: It is important that a woman be represented.

PR: Do you think so? Who do you think is suitable? What about Vandana Soni? No, think over it. Don't say just because I am saying, I don't want you to say yes. That is not a joke. Because, I mean, they are going to work together. Bill?

Q: He is the one who lives next door.

PR: No, no, some people must be given work and tested, and those who are found wanting will continue to train until they become good. Otherwise, you know, if you don't insist on a woman it can be Charles Treichler, because he now has to play an increasingly, shall I say, difficult role in the Mission's work, what we were discussing last night, it might be necessary to distribute the work of publication, reconstitute the North American Publishing Committee. Is he here? Charlie?

Are you willing? ["Yes, sir."] Carried. If you want, we can have a lady representative, too, increase the trustees to six... Yes, I know you are all going to serve the Mission in one way or the other. The best service is by becoming perfect yourself. That is what Babuji wants. The best way of serving the Master is to become what he wants you to become. If in that we fail, all the other services are subsidiary services. So, in that way all of you can serve Him. This is a small thing, you know, this is a mundane...

There was a very poor response, I am told, to the election ballot, and if you continue to turn in a poor response to election ballots you will be governed in the Mission as you are being governed in the country — poorly. Democracy is useful only when everyone exercises his right to vote sensibly, not emotionally. If, in the Mission, out of 600 members, 160 turn in their votes, it is hardly a democratic procedure. Then I would rather go back to the old way of doing things in my own way, with my own initiative, with my own judgement. If you would prefer that, we will still continue to send out ballots because your law requires it, but then I will not speak about it again.

So, abhyasis must be responsible members of the Mission, responsible in the sense that they recognize that they have a duty towards the Mission because they have a duty towards themselves. Every citizen wants a good government because without a good government the citizens suffer. So, when we elect a good government or what we think is a good government we are doing for ourselves not for the sake of the government. Here, too, it will be the same thing. If you are sensible and responsible in your attitude towards the Mission and its needs which, I repeat, are only to fulfil your needs for spiritual growth, then I hope all of you will behave more responsibly in the future, more responsibly in the active organizational and administrative processes of the Mission, more responsibly in your sadhana, more responsibly in your life in the ashram, maintenance of the ashram — everything. I

consider that a responsible member of the Mission could not make flippant statements like "They are asking for money," for instance. If we did not ask for money we would not have this ashram, we would not be sitting here.

So we have to recognize that the Mission has a right to put up proposals for your benefit. You have a right to throw the proposals out. "No, we don't want an ashram." Fine. I don't need an ashram anywhere. If we build ashrams in the U.S. it is for your sake, with your money. If you don't want it you have a right to say you don't want any more ashrams, but you have no right to say, "Don't ask for money." The Mission has a right to ask for money; you have a right to refuse money but not to make any comments about it. I consider it extremely flippant and, what shall I say, irresponsible to make such comments. We have a right not to give — after all, it is my money and I may give it, I may not give it. Always the few build, the many enjoy. That is the way things come about. And the few who are now building things will continue to build things, but when we ask for your co-operation it also tells us to what degree you are committed to the Mission.

Everybody talks of love for the Master, love for the Mission, love for the method, but when it comes to a few dollars they gripe. Please do not misunderstand this as a demand for money. We can do without your money, but we cannot do without your sincerity and your genuine love for the Mission. So, let us not parade under these false facades of love and so-called commitment, let there be some backing, like in economics a sound currency had a gold backing. Nowadays, of course, there is no talk of any gold backing, there is only credit card backing. So, I would request all of you to talk to your friends and abhyasis, and tell them it is to fulfil your needs, your aspirations, that the Mission has to create meditation halls, ashrams, etc., wherever they may be needed.

That is one comment I would like you all to consider seriously. Brood over it, remembering that you have a right not to participate financially in anything, but you don't have a

right to infringe on the right of the Mission to ask for money. Let that be clearly understood.

Preceptors have a role to play in this matter in explaining why money is needed to abhyasis. It is no use a preceptor saying, "Well, I don't know, for heaven's sake, they keep asking for money. I myself gave fifty dollars. If you want to give me something you may give me five dollars." It is not enough. Preceptors are shying away from their responsibility when they are responsible. I believe this Mission's growth has been largely impeded because preceptors have not behaved as they should, have not worked as they should, have not put out the Mission's ideals as they should, have spoken flippantly about spirituality, have spoken without understanding about spirituality, and have done sittings without reading the preceptors' manuals. So, I suggest all preceptors should once again read the preceptors' manuals. After all, they are printed for you to read, not for my edification. So, I hope all of you will take your roles seriously and work for the betterment of the Mission.

It is now twenty-one years since this Mission has been on this soil of the U.S. There is growth but it is not enough. And what is growth? It is not that I want ten thousand abhyasis in the U.S. It is that more members of the country should be served in the real sense. Your country is wonderful in serving the great greenback demands of society, you see. You are so wonderful in fulfilling material demands that aliens from all over the world have come and settled here. But the primary need of a human being to evolve into a state of beatitude, bliss, growth, divinised state, your country is unable to fulfil, your societies are unable to fulfil, your government is unable to fulfil, and they have not even attempted it. That is the role of the Mission. If you want that, you will co-operate with the Mission. If you don't, America will remain what it is, and since things cannot remain what they were, it will decline.

I would urge all of you to read Babuji's last chapter in *Reality at Dawn*, 'My Vision', what he has said about the

USA. It is a bitter pill to swallow that this country, which has been helping the world with its aid through the last so many years, decades, should sink into abject poverty. It will sink into poverty because you are living on borrowed money. Nobody owns anything in this country, not even the American government. You know, the public debt. Even your armaments don't belong to you if you look at it that way. It is all on borrowed money. So, one day if your debtors, or if your creditors would say pay up... I often have nightmares that one morning suddenly Mr. Bush would wake up and a Chinaman or a Japanese will say, "Bush, come out of that place. The White House belongs to me." Don't laugh. It's going to happen if you are not careful, because they are buying up properties all over the place. Now, there is nothing wrong in buying up properties if you have the money you need for your nation. Now, who owns a house in the US? It is all mortgaged. Small house on mortgage, exchange a bigger house for a bigger mortgage, and a five-bedroom mansion for a bigger mortgage, to a seven-bedroom house for an even bigger mortgage. Start off with a $250 car to a $500 to a $5,000 to a $50,000 Cadillac, all on mortgage. Who owns anything? It is a society, a sham society, a society built of houses of cards.

You all have a duty to correct your society, to bring a new sense of values to your society. Nobody can live in an isolated way. You may build a house on an isolated farm fifteen miles away from anybody else, but you cannot live like that. You have an obligation to your society, and that obligation is a spiritual obligation. Let us try to understand this, let all our abhyasis try to understand this, let them be educated to understand this, let them be strengthened to offer it to others. Because, without strength you cannot talk about something even if you cherish it, even if you use it for your own growth, even if you admire it, even if you love it.

The Mission in America has, above all other Missions everywhere, a bigger role to play for itself here because this society, as I see it, is the most endangered society. Morally, of

course, everybody knows it is a shambles, but even materially that is in danger. How many of you know? It is easy to be deluded by these large beautiful malls full of the good things of life, sold cheaper than anywhere else on earth. Have you ever examined how you can sell things cheaper than anywhere on earth?

So, please awaken yourselves to a new sense of responsibility, the abhyasis, the preceptors, everybody, and I hope and pray that there will be a successful trust in the future years so that we can see palpably a change in the American society. As far as I am concerned that is all I have to say. If the board or individual members have anything else to say I am here to listen and do what you wish me to do.

I request that John Barlow should keep in constant touch with Santosh and Bill, work in harmony, work in co-operation. I want all of you understand that the primary work of preceptors is the spiritual work and the less we have to do with paperwork and other things the better we shall perform as preceptors. So, try to reduce paperwork, try to reduce all these cumbersome details of management to the bare minimum. I said this in one of the board meetings of the American Mission, the annual general assembly of the French Mission, that our conformity to the law is necessary, but you do not have to kill yourself with conformity and making paperwork which is not necessary. We have the facts, we are honest, and we are totally national and sympathetic to the national interests of the USA, so we have nothing to hide. When somebody wants something we can always provide something. So, we must be efficient in having perfect records with the minimum of records, not multiplication.

It is too easy to fall into this craze to make different sorts of analysis of everything. I do it myself. The moment the computer came into my life it made me more paper conscious. I play with figures: if this was that, how much would be that; if that was this, how much would be this, you know. It is more easy to fall in love with a computer than with a woman. That

is the complaint most wives make about their husbands, and that is not a joke, too! I remember when I first got my fax machine, I had it next to my bed because all night I was sending faxes, receiving faxes. It was some sort of new toy, and I was shocked one day when my wife told a friend, "He sleeps with his fax machine!" [laughter] I don't think she meant it in the sense in which you all understand it, because she is too innocent for that. I won't let anyone go near it, it is my beloved.

So, is there anything else, any formal discussion?

Q: We want to talk about the future of this ashram.

PR: The future of this ashram you have to discuss among yourselves, and we have a caretaker, but perhaps it needs to be handed over to a committee who will deal with all the day-to-day details and which will include capable people, not on a representational basis, but capable people — for instance a carpenter, an electrician, things like that. What Ben Warren has been doing, many should share. Also, we should get into the habit of members of the Mission from all over the country coming here and periodically using this Mission, because once something is not used it goes into disrepair. The pipes rust first, the sinks clog, the toilets get clogged. I do not know how it happens with nothing going into it, but they get clogged.

Similarly, we have preceptor power grossness. When the preceptor does not do his work there is power grossness. It is a clogging of the power in his system. So, everything has to be used, used rightly, used appropriately on the right occasion for the betterment of people. Then everything is fine. This should not become a temple or a monument. Monument to what? A temple for what? We have no God to worship here. He is here inside me, so each one of us is a temple. So, it should be used for the purpose for which it was created: meditation, seminars. We can have seminars all around here, one every month, one for the abhyasis from the southern states, one for the eastern states, like that we can divide. At the Augerans ashram we

have people coming from Switzerland, from Germany, from Denmark, all the year round. Thirty people, fifty people at a time; they have their seminars, they relax for a week, do meditation and they go home. Now, the last four days we have been having what they call a karma yoga seminar, 160 people went there to clean up the place, clean windows over a three day period, and it was fun.

Please remember that work, when you put your heart into it, becomes fun, and work when there is no heart into it is drudgery. There is no change in the work. It is a difference created by whether your heart is in it or your heart is not in it. Always it is a question of the heart. Same with marriage, same with work, same, if I may say so, with death. If my heart is in my death I am eternal. If I leave my heart here, I have to come back for it again and again.

So, don't leave your hearts behind. Come with your hearts, work with your hearts, and go with your hearts. You should have a talk about it later, get some more people involved, activate people. The only way of doing good is to widen the circle of activity. The more we make it restrictive, the more people feel left out, unwanted, uncalled, and they say. "Okay, they are doing it. Fine." The secret is to involve more and more people. Anybody who wants to help co-opt them, don't worry about their capacities. If the heart is there, capacity will come. Capacity without the heart is useless in Sahaj Marg. Okay, that's all I have to say. We have five minutes more.

Q: Master, it is so good to see so many young abhyasis. It makes me feel that there is true hope in the youth of America.

PR: I do not see any hope for the youth or the old. I see hope for the Americans. Don't divide society into... this is the problem of every way of thinking, that some country thinks about its youth, exploits youth, markets youth, you know, like you are marketing cat food, dog food, animal food. It is an exploitation. The poor dogs and cats don't enjoy the benefit of

this multimillion dollar advertising on TV. Who enjoys? Some crazy fellow with enough money to buy cat food and dog food and throw it away. So, Americans per se, not youth, not old, because it is solely a passage of time that discriminates between youth and old age. Don't fall into this trap.

Q: Maybe it is a part of this trap that I was thinking about developing a children publishing committee, but maybe it should just be a part of the publishing committee.

PR: Yes, yes. Participation does not mean, in the official participation in work, you understand. Every day I get letters: "I want to serve the Mission," but it does not have to be in this way or that way. So, that is about all. Yes.

Q: I wanted to make sure that I understand that I need to be part of the regular publishing...

PR: You may be. I said we would use you somewhere. We need people not only with talent but with willingness to offer their talent, you understand. Like we have people with money but only those willing to give money give it. That you have money does not automatically mean you are willing to give.

Q: Do you feel...

PR: No, I don't feel anything, I don't say anything. You just keep quiet. When the time comes we will let you know. Nothing is decided here. They will decide. I decide about them, they decide about you. It is like a lake, you know, it has tied up all the water within it with a hard bank all around it. Isn't it? The water cannot flow. A little cut anywhere — that's how the heart opens. The heart opens only by giving. The more we give the more the heart opens of anything, of whatever we have. That is why in all these religions of this world they emphasize giving, but they unfortunately restricted it to wealth, money, and things like that. Sell your cattle, sell your houses, you know. That is not enough.

So, thank you everybody. I wish you all joy of spiritual growth and happiness.

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IT IS FOR YOUR EVOLUTION

East Durham, New York, USA
14 October, 1992

I don't know what it's all about, but I will relate a short advice Babuji gave me. When I was first coming to Europe in 1971, I mean, after I joined the Mission, he said, "Please go with some talks prepared, because these white people, you know, they think they are very intelligent and intellectual, and they would like to discuss things with you, and you must be in a position to make them understand." Then he said one thing which was very canny, you know, almost like the Irish people, I thought. He said, "You have to find out whether they want to hear what you want to say, or whether you have to say what they want to hear!" [laughs] Now, that is an exercise I have been attempting all along these last thirty years, but judging from what Patrick Fleury just said, I don't think I have succeeded. Sometimes when I think you want to hear something I have to say, I say the opposite! And sometimes when I say what I think you should hear, you don't like it. So, I am happy that the dirty part of the speech was finished by

Patrick, because he spoke about discipline, which is not a favourite subject at all in the West.

I might add a little to that, because as he said, I think most of the problems of the Occident in relation to discipline stem from problems with the parents: girls with their mothers, boys with their fathers. Or a second instance: bad experiences with your religion, being let down by the church, by not finding what you want in the church, being sanctimoniously lectured to from the pulpits of your churches. "Thou shalt not..., Thou shalt not..., Thou shalt not...," ad nauseum.

I don't think you people are that stupid, that you don't want to follow discipline, because even to get here from New York, or Boston, or wherever, you needed guidance. "Take 85 North, take Exit 21, get into 17 North, take Exit 17, get into 36 North." What is it but discipline when you obey this? When you have these beautiful road networks as you have in the US — superb roads, superbly marked, nowhere else in the world will you find such wonderful road signs — you are obeying something to get somewhere. That is discipline. Now, if you are not going somewhere you won't have a map, you won't ask for instructions, you don't care where 85 goes or 95 goes or US-10 goes; where it goes, I couldn't care less.

So, discipline is for somebody who wants to get someplace from where he is. I don't know if you have had the experience of somebody telephoning you at night and saying, "Hey, how do I get to your place?" The first question you ask him is, "Where are you?" because unless you know where he is, you can't give him guidance about how to get to where he has to go. Obviously, you see. There is always a beginning to a journey and an end to a journey, because if he is to the north of you, he must come south to come to you. If he is to the south of you, he must take north to come to you. Suppose there is a child there, and he says, "Papa, the other guy called and you said 'Come south,' and this fellow calls you and you say 'Come north.' What is this nonsense? We are in the same

place, and you are telling two different friends of yours two different directions. How is it possible?" Then you have to explain to that child of yours, "My son, suppose you are here; he is here, he is there. How would he come to us?" That is teaching, you see, so that he may later on understand and discipline himself to take the right path for his own benefit.

So we have to know where we are at, where we are, we have to know where to go, and we have to know the road. Now, all this is obviated, or shall we say, made unnecessary in a spiritual pursuit, if you would only trust your guide. He says, "You are here." Wonderful, we all know that! I mean, generally we are not confused about where we are unless we are lost, as Patrick said. But one thing Patrick did not say correctly was, "When we are lost, we have to help ourselves." We cannot help ourselves. We shout! We shout, like we shout from a telephone booth, when I am telephoning my friend from Harlem and I don't know how to get to Staten Island, and he says, "Where are you?" I look to a passer-by, and I say, "Can you tell me where I am right now?" He says, "Corner of 17th and 45th." Then I am able to relay that to my friend. So, even there we need help.

Now, under circumstances where we are in desperate need, we don't think it is demeaning, or *infra dig*, to ask somebody for help. Spirituality says, ask for it even when you don't need it, when you think you are on top of the world, when you think you are wise, when you think you are wealthy, when you think you are healthy, when you think you are beautiful — ask then! Because that is when we make most mistakes. The fool never makes mistakes. He blunders from blunder to blunder and somehow manages to get where he has to get. The wise man thinks he knows where he is going, and in his imagination of his own greatness, his wisdom, he makes mistakes. He says, "Oh, I took the wrong exit, and you know, I had to go around twenty miles before I could come back to where I have to get." One single wrong exit, you see, in these beautiful roads, and you are lost. In India we have no exits —

I mean, we have no roads to keep up! [laughter] And so it's very easy not to lose our way! Here, you have all these beautiful roads, and we are always losing our way. The secret is the correct exit.

Now, I made a joke when we came here when somebody told me that last night he had taken a wrong exit and had go to around and around New York before finding his way again. In life, too, we have to find the right exit. Death is such an exit. But it is also an exit where, shall we say, there is a 'Y' — the road branching off into two branches. One coming back in a loop — like, you know, if you are coming out of 85 North, and there it says, 17 South, 17 North, and you take the wrong road and you're back again on 85 in the same direction. You take the same loop again and again, and you say, "Oh, I know the way, you see. I have taken the same exit every time!" That is knowledge for you, that is experience for you. Now comes an old man like my Babuji Maharaj, who says, "Please forget all this. You come with me. Follow me." You just follow him, and you'll get out of the loop.

So you see, all that glitters is not gold. The best roads are not necessarily the best, because there are so many exits, not every one of them is the right exit. Spirituality tells us, "This is the right exit. If you take this exit, you keep moving on — no coming back. If you do it the wrong way, you are going to loop around, looking for the way all your life."

So you see, spirituality is nothing but being taught the road — which road to take, where to exit, and if you don't know to read, if you don't know the north from the south, just follow. Obedience means following. It does not mean lack of freedom, or giving up your freedom, it does not mean selling yourself into bondage or slavery. It only means, "I suspend my power of judgement, hand it over to this guy who says he can lead me, and when I am there — salute! I don't need the fellow any more." What on earth for? I mean, I wouldn't go on following a Cadillac just because it's a Cadillac, would I?

"No, no, it's a lovely car to follow." But I want to go to Boston, and this guy's going to New York. "So what does it matter? It's a beautiful car, Chari!"

So, we follow things which are taking us in the wrong way, because they are enticing, because they are attractive, because they lead us on. You don't want to be lead on and on in the wrong direction by enticements. Now, the difficulty in avoiding enticement is, precisely as Patrick said, desire. Desire leads us in one way, the goal is in the other way. The whole effort of spirituality is to choose that which I must choose, avoiding that which I must avoid, in **my** interest. If any of you are asked to obey, or follow, or abide by certain regulations, principles, it is for **your** benefit.

The first understanding that you need of discipline is that it is for **your** benefit. Speed limits are for your benefit. To follow the rule of driving on the right side is for your benefit. "Oh, why can't I drive on the left? I am a citizen of this great and wonderful USA." Well, try it. If you are not dead before the cop comes, he will take you away! It is a matter of life and death, you see, and when it is a matter of life and death, you don't think it's obedience, you think it's safety. "Oh, but it's safe to drive on the right, Chari." What do you mean it is safe? It is a matter of life and death.

So, when it is a question of your life, you are willing to obey. But here, spirituality is not only of this life, but of the next life, too — the transcendental life. Are you willing to enjoy this life at the cost of that life? Are you willing to fool around with this life at the cost of the next life? Because if you do that, the next life is blocked, you are looping the loop.

So, the first understanding, I repeat, of discipline, is that discipline is created for **your** benefit. Somebody once asked my Master about these Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg. The first one says, "Arise at dawn," or something like that. My Master never got up before seven. So, somebody said, "Babuji, are you following the Ten Maxims?" He said, "I made them for

your benefit, not for mine!" [laughter] Obviously, when a teacher creates a text, or notes for the text, it is not for himself that he has created it. You don't go to your professor of chemistry or computer science, and say, "Hey, Prof — did you read this yourself?" He says, "I wrote the damn thing!" [laughter] "But did you read it?" It would be stupid to ask your professor whether he read what he wrote because **you** are expected to read what **he** wrote. Isn't it?

That is the second understanding, that the teacher does not have to follow his own teaching. People expect the professor to read again, and pass his exams again. "Hey, come on, we'll do the PhD together!" [laughter] The guide sitting and writing the exam, and the student sitting and writing them exam, and the student would be delighted if the professor said, "Why don't you mark my grades for me?" He would be delighted, absolutely. "Oh, look how much trust this old fellow has in me! He is giving me his papers, by Jove, to mark for him."

So you see, all wrong concepts, all wrong concepts arising out of our egos. "I am great, I am intelligent, I am wise, I am rich. Why should I bother with this old fellow who is sitting here?" Don't! We are not concerned whether you bother with this old fellow here or not. We are concerned whether you bother with **yourself**. You are here as a patient goes to a doctor to be healed. When the doctor says, "No smoking," you better not smoke. When he says, "No meat," you better not eat meat, and most of you don't, unless you're so stupid that you don't care what the doctor says. Isn't it? If the doctor says, "Two pills a day," you say, "Why not, Doc, I take four, so that I can be healed in half the time that you expect me to be healed." That should be the attitude here, too. "Only one hour meditation, Chari? Can you meditate two hours?" If you asked, it would be delightful. It would show that you are interested in yourselves.

Now, who are you interested in if you come here and don't want to meditate, don't want to follow instructions, don't want to follow rules? Who are you interested in? Not in yourself, obviously, and not in the old fellow who is talking to you. Then what on earth are we doing here? Just to get married? Well, it's delightful. But, Sahaj Marg, while performing marriages, also invokes higher blessing upon the couples. That is the purpose of getting married here, I hope. That is why people come to us to get married by us. That in some way, in some arcane way, in some spiritual way, there is a certain assurance of a future, shall we say, well-being, blessedness in marital life. But you have to work for it, no less than if you are married in church.

Nothing works unless you work at it. A man wants to become big and strong, he has to do push-ups and barbells and dumbbells. You don't just get strong by sitting in your easy chair, or by eating pizza. I like pizza, too, but, [laughs] a little slice at a time!

So, please understand that spirituality is for **you**. It is for **your** benefit. It is for **your** evolution. It is for **you** to reach the goal that the Master comes and kills himself. He doesn't get anything out of it. I was tempted, you know, when there was an announcement to pay for cost sharing for the cars. I am often tempted — you know, I have a little meanness left in me! I am often tempted to impose a fee: $250 for the first sitting, $500 for individual sittings, $1,000 for cosmic region in three months! [laughter] It is a joke, but I assure you if I did this, this whole field would be full of people who are willing to pay for their spiritual evolution. Why? Because in America, in the Occidental races, there is this deeply ingrained idea that you cannot have something free. It is stupid! Everything in nature is free — the air that you breathe is free, the water that you drink is free. Your life is free; you didn't pay for it. But if you don't utilize that life properly you will have to pay with your life.

So, the prize of a life properly lived is glory beyond even imagination. That is the value of a life properly lived. It is multiplied and multiplied infinitely, until divine consciousness is nothing but the multiplication of the human consciousness to such an extent that you are almost divine — there cannot be two gods. And the life, and the value of a life foolishly lived is that life itself.

Which would you have? As intelligent people, educated people, intelligent, educated, rich, which would you prefer? We are always talking in terms of value, value added taxes. Are we not going to add value to our lives? Are we going to go, less than what we came in? The purpose of meditation is not just to please somebody, or to acquire some arcane qualities. The purpose of a diary is not just to put down something you can read for your benefit later. It must be a catalogue of spiritual evolution, a chronicle, a progressive escalation in your life, in its values, in its purposes, in its being.

What is the use of reading Darwin, and saying, "Aha, the mollusk has become a man." In between, poor fellow, the chimpanzee, who we don't want to recognize. You know, it's funny, we don't want to recognize our near relatives if they are poor! Our neighbour can be poor, our friend can be poor, but if my cousin is poor, I sniff a little. "He is my cousin." Similarly, I can recognize that the mollusk or the amoeba, or whatever it was: "He was the source of my evolution, but not the chimpanzee, poor thing, which looks very much like me, which does antics like me. Because in that poor thing, caged for my benefit, I see myself mirrored. And it is not good — it stinks." So we say, "For heaven's sake, how could that be my progenitor?"

But on the other side, when you say we are descended from God, you say, "Which God? What God? Where the hell is he today? I am suffering! Where is God?" So which would you like? The chimpanzee or God? It depends on you. If you

continue to create for yourself the environment of a zoo, with claws and teeth and animal passions — that is what you will become. If you change your environment into a beautiful garden of hearts, blushing everywhere like roses, delightful people, delightful love, delightful hearts, harmony, peace, togetherness — then that is what we shall have.

All the story of the Garden of Eden, and Adam and Eve, and being thrown out, is nothing but this original state where we were all really human beings with divine qualities, divine blessedness, divine assurance, got into a life of antics, of passions, of desires, and created of that Garden of Eden, a zoo — full now of wolves and dogs and creatures, of which we are afraid, of which are repugnant to us. How to change it? It is like the island of Circe, where every sailor who went and got enticed became an animal. It was only a story, a parable, but it is mirroring the truth — that if you fall into temptation, that if you hear the voice that is enticing, the call of the merely fleshly life, then we become swines. If you are able to avoid that island of the Circe, the Scylla and the Charybdis, and go beyond, then you go into those regions which are supposed to be blessed. Greek legends, Roman legends, Hindu legends, Indian legends, Incas, Mayas — what have you, they all speak of the same thing.

When so many people speak of the same thing, when so many ethnically different people have the same story of the history of evolution and the human fall into degradation, can it be wrong? That being so, what is wisdom? Does it lie merely in a PhD degree and a seventy-thousand dollar income? Or is it in making myself again, into something resembling that which I was, and that which I must be again.

So you see, spirituality is nothing more than saying, "This you are" — no blame. As Patrick said, write your diaries without judgement, because you cannot ever judge yourself. For one thing, we lie to ourselves, we cheat ourselves. No person on earth knows what he really is. Given the right

circumstances it can be the tooth and the claw. Given other sets of circumstances it can be heart.

Don't presume to judge. Just write down immediately after the sitting what you feel, because that is only a reportage, like a doctor takes your pulse, your thermometer measurement, and your blood pressure, and notes it down. There is no judgement. It is a diagnosis. A judgement is not a diagnosis; a diagnosis is not a judgement. He must know so that he may treat you in the appropriate fashion. Depending on the seriousness of your illness, he creates for you a therapy, a treatment, a regimen of diet. For whose sake will you follow it? For the doctor's sake? It is for your sake, obviously. So we say, "Okay, Doc."

Here, too, the same thing happens. Only thing — here there is no need for diagnosis, because whatever you are, the goal is the same, and for that goal, the Master knows the way. All that you have to do is to be willing to go with him hand in hand to the destination. The only discipline that we ask for, we seek from you, is this co-operation of taking hold of his hand and walking side by side with him. Not behind him, because behind him means below him. "Why should I walk behind that fellow?" Well, he would be very happy if you go ahead of him, and show him the way, too. He would be delighted. He would say, "Ah, here is a son who already knows the way. Come!"

So you see, we walk side by side, head erect, chest thrown out, proud as, what shall we say, swans? Yes, why not. Fearless as lions, proud as swans, noble as the Maker himself, hand in hand, because He with whom I walk is my companion, and if my companion is what He is, I cannot be less than what He is when He has taken my hand. By taking hold of His hand we gain confidence, we gain strength, we become fearless, and above all, we become dignified — we inherit his dignity. If President Bush were to take my hand and walk with me to the podium and say, "Here is Mr. Chari," how proud I would be.

A mere president of a mere country. I heard the other day that somebody had donated six million dollars to sit at the same table as Bush at dinner. Six million!

So, you see how ideas of prestige are there. But to walk with God Himself, hand in hand — what prestige? There is no more any prestige, you see. His light is shed upon me, I shine by His light. His wisdom, His light, they light my way. He guides me — I have no more fear. I have nothing to fear. What can I fear with Him next to me? So, what are we exchanging? We are exchanging a self-centred, fearful, tearful, purposeless life for a life of absolute confidence, courage, conviction, and fulfilment of our life's purpose.

This is the way of spiritual progress. This is what Sahaj Marg offers, and to fulfil that purpose I have pleasure on behalf of all of you in dedicating this ashram to the memory of my beloved Master, Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahajhanpur, with the implied promise that all those who come here as real seekers shall receive all his blessings.

Thank you.

MIRACLE BOTSWA RIDER
VINELAND
Postcards

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AWAKEN TO YOUR TRUE SELF

Staten Island, New Jersey, USA
16 October, 1992

One day Babuji asked me to bring a bottle of something, some medicine, perhaps. He was using it all the time, and when I brought it to him, he found it was empty and he said, "This is useless," and threw it away. Now, that is a profound meaning, because what we are trying to do here is to put something into empty bottles. Spirit — that is why it is called spirituality. People often say, "I will do it later, I will do it later." I mean, each one has to decide for himself or herself what they want to do in life, of course, but when we remember Babuji's definition of life as 'life in life', and when we also remember what he said, that most of the human beings are not really alive, but are being moved and motivated by things which are in them as samskaras, like a toy wound up, it also means putting life into you. It is like one of those old stories, of a statue coming alive again — Pygmalion, I believe — George Bernard Shaw's story. It is making people live all over again.

So, even death has no meaning for the average human being of today, because that which is not alive cannot die. I would like you to think over this very carefully. That which is not alive cannot die, and if what my Master said is true, that most of us, most of the human beings of today are only toys, or automated things moving and playing — it reminds me of Omar Khayyam's statement:

"This is all a checkerboard of nights and days,
where destiny with men for pieces plays,
and moves and mates and plays and slays,
and one by one back in the closet lays."

We are like chessmen, moved around by a destiny of our own creation, and therefore, if I am only a toy which is being activated by something which I have wound up in myself, I neither live nor do I die. Therefore, our death is purposeless. It doesn't achieve anything, because living or dead, there is no difference in our conditions.

This brings to my mind a famous statement attributed to Plato, that we must die a long death — which means not coming back. Nowadays we have short deaths. You are dead one moment and reborn the next moment. It is like a toy that falls and you put it back on its feet, and it continues to do its act. What is this? There is no change in the life. Even that reborn life is the same life pushed in its ways by the same samskaras, repetitive, again and again and again, so we neither live purposefully nor die purposefully. Neither our life nor our death is effective. Both are prisons for us — in life we are in prison, in death we are in prison. From prison to prison, it is like a prisoner going within the same prison, from cell to cell, and pretending to be free. "Oh, I was in 109 yesterday, today I am in 211." Six weeks later he is pushed up to the upper story, and he says, "Oh, I have been promoted!" The jailer laughs, and says, "The blighter is crazy! Moving from cell to cell and he thinks he is changing his life.

So, having lived purposelessly, or perhaps, to take an extreme understanding, not having lived at all till today, just being slaves of our passions, desires, etc. — they have been consuming us. Like they say of a drunkard, you know the advice, that man drinks from a bottle, then the bottle drinks from the bottle, then the bottle drinks from the man! It saps his life away from him.

We have become enslaved by ourselves — our own self, in the sense of passions, hatreds, desires, all negative things. So, when the Master gave his first transmission, he said, "Awakening. Sleeper awake." Don't think I am exaggerating. Please think over it again and again, and if you find some sense in it, continue meditation — otherwise, drop it, because acceptance is vital to your progress. Acceptance, not of the system, not of the Master, not of the method, not of the Mission — all blah-blah. Acceptance of the truth of your existence, which today is non-existence. You have to accept the fact that you are not really living. That is why most people are bored, even going to the extent of committing suicide: "Let me see if I am alive." And in that moment of extinction, perhaps something comes awake, we don't know.

To become alive again is the first opportunity that spiritual practice affords us. Now, having become alive, what should we do about it? Should I go back to my death, and live the same life that I was living before? Same passions, same arrogance, same mercenary life, same, shall we say, existential miseries, same hatred, same loves, same desires. Or should I now behave as a man or a person who has woken up to the facts of existence?

A sleeping person may scratch himself without knowing what he is doing, or roll on a mosquito and kill it without knowing what he is doing, or have nightmares which he cannot control. But a waking person is not supposed to behave without the ability to control himself or herself. This is discipline. The ability to regulate your own life to your own

best possible interest, so that you can reach a specified goal of evolution, is discipline. Discipline does not mean going to the right or to the left, smoking or not smoking. These are all loose and cheap connotations of discipline. Discipline means, am I living in the only way possible in which I can evolve? Insects are doing it, birds are doing it, whales are doing it.

But for human intervention, everything would have evolved. Human beings not only damn themselves, condemn themselves to an eternity in hell, but are condemning everything else to eternities in hell. No walruses, no whales, no Sea World, very soon. It's no fun, you know, having six whales and three porpoises in a tank, and pretending to be saving marine life, when in every fishing season you are slaughtering millions of them. What for? For cosmetic industries. Why cosmetic industries? Women must look beautiful. Were they not beautiful ever since creation? Did not Adam fall for Eve? Would he have done so had she been ugly? No answers. Do women need cosmetics? Not at all. But an economist says, "But what would happen to the economy, Chari?" Well, let Clinton or Bush take care of that! You look after yourself, the economy will look after itself. Economy is my servant. I am not economy's servant. I don't have to do stupid things to keep an economy up.

It is a crime to print a newspaper with seventy-six pages and say, "Oh, each one reads one section; somebody reads the business section, somebody reads the sports section...," and throwing away one and a half kilos of paper every morning, unread, unopened. This is your economy — it is a false economy, it is a stupid economy, it is a crazy economy, it is a criminal economy. And what are you doing it for? For some funny idea of a wonderful society with high standards of living — high standards, shown by things you are throwing away, not by things you are retaining. You have thrown away your morality, you have thrown away your culture, now you are throwing away things — the last things to go. When we come alive, when we wake up again, we shall know what we

have been doing is criminal, is wasteful, is negligent, is destructive of all life.

Today we are talking so much about pollution of the environment. Why? Because, our pollution is endangering ourselves. When we are at risk of dying, we say, "Oh, poor forests, they are dying away, the trees are dying because of acid rain," and blame the Orient, the Middle East, and Africa, not modern industrial nations which are creating the pollution and trying to export it down the river in barges. I am told one barge load of muck was sent from New York to South America, and they kept it for six months on the ocean without allowing it, and it was shipped right back to the USA. So you enjoy the goodies; everybody should enjoy the baddies. A whole shipload of nuclear waste was sent to Nigeria under some false papers — did you read about it a couple of years back? Not only criminal — murderous. "They can die, they are only blacks. Ignorant, black, stinking." Who stinks? Blacks have no cosmetic industry. They don't need it. They don't stink!

So, please come alive to the realities of your situation, your personal situation. Do I look beautiful without cosmetics? Wipe off everything from your face. You will look beautiful. Am I really good? Forget all the sanctimonious charities that you are doing. You know, six pennies here, ten pennies there, a couple of dollars in a black man's hat — forget it. Am I charitable **to myself**? Can I look at myself and say, "Don't care a damn what you are today, because you are going to be something else tomorrow"? Such a person alone can be charitable. He who cannot be charitable to himself cannot be charitable to anybody else. "Charity begins at home" does not mean, "Make millions and give it to your children!" "Oh, I have given six million to my son, fourteen million to my daughter, and twenty-two million to my grandson." That is not charity.

"Charity begins at home" means — be charitable to yourself. Don't judge yourself harshly. "Know thyself," not "Judge thyself." Having known myself, should I condemn myself? Not at all. Correct myself — change the course of my destiny by taking my destiny in my two arms or my two hands, and creating a fresh something which I have forgotten. "Sleeper, awake" means we wake up to a life of work again. We don't wake up to go asleep again, or to relax. We wake up to work.

In spiritual work also, we must wake up in the literal sense of waking up to the fact that we have been this, this, and this, and work upon ourselves to become this, this and this. Spirituality is not a joke. It is not a pastime. It is not a social objective. It is something very, very serious, very, very immediate, and vital to existence itself — human existence. Because, God forbid, if a day comes when there are no humans here, the rest of the world will heave a sigh of relief. "Thank heavens they are gone!" What will happen to us? We should not imagine that we have contributed anything to the rest of life so far, except destruction, criminal negligence, criminal violation of all rights. Now let us give ourselves a chance, and give everything else a chance, because until you realise the state that each one of you are in, you cannot appreciate what other things are suffering. A man who has never been sick cannot have any sympathy for a sick person. A man who has never been poor cannot have sympathy for the poor.

Therefore, spirituality speaks of a basic life. Cut out luxuries, cut out things which you don't need. Lead a simple life. To be in tune with nature does not mean to go with your nice sleeping bag into the jungle and sleeping there. It means to know and understand and interact with nature. Try to see how the trees feel when you are present there. Are they shrinking with fear at your presence? Do the birds and bees fly away when you come, because they have been shot at for nothing, through centuries of, what shall we say, Occidental

civilization? Killed for nothing — deer killed and left to rot. Nobody eats them. It is for pleasure. You see, the hunting season is here and we must hunt, and today men are hunting, women are hunting — what? Each other!

So you see, we are afraid of the USA! Everybody is afraid — men are afraid to walk in the streets alone, women are afraid to walk in the streets alone, children are afraid. Who is not afraid? Today, we are afraid of each other.

Until we correct this, until we wake up, become really alive, we cannot be responsible. A sleeping man is not responsible for what he does. A man in a coma is not responsible for what he does or does not do. He has neither sin of commission nor omission. He is already dead! Waking up means waking up to a life of responsibility, of purpose, and through responsibility and purpose, to fulfilment.

So you see, it is a very serious business, not for one sitting and two sittings and three sittings, but to make life itself a meditation. It is not a half hour business, followed by twenty minutes in the evening of, "For heaven's sake, cleaning all over again." Not like that. Spiritual life must become your only life. Not in the sense that meditation and cleaning and constant remembrance are your life. But what do we do during meditation and cleaning and constant remembrance? We think of the goal, to make it dynamic. Unless that is there, it is a mechanical thing all over again. Instead of going on the roundabout this way, we are on the Catherine wheel this way. Doesn't help, doesn't change our situation.

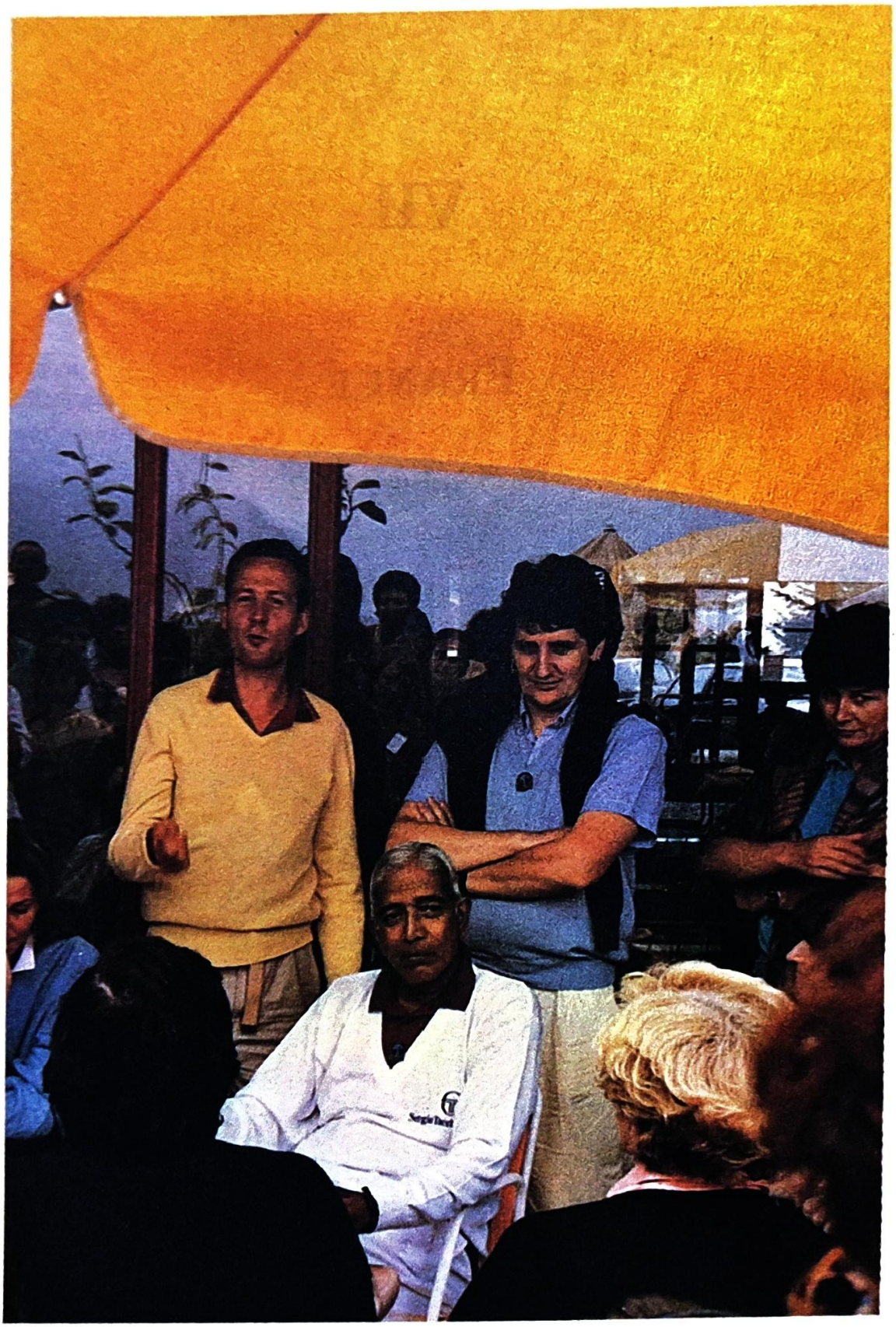
All of you, please re-examine your aims and objectives. Why are you here? Continue to be here only if you desire to become a human being — alive, vital, purposeful — fulfilled, eventually. If not, throw the damn thing [spirituality] away!

Thank you.

VII

FRANCE

19 October, 1992



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GURU AS MOTHER

Paris, France
19 October, 1992

I am happy to be with you all, and I don't think it should be said, also, because the way of recognizing this is through the heart. I'm sure you all feel it, like I feel that you are all happy to be with me.

I am sorry that I had to cancel the Augerans seminar this year, because it was important to finish our job in Denmark. I am grateful to all of you for your magnificent support, and you will all be happy to hear that the ashram in Vrads Sande is paid for completely. [applause] Whatever little is left to be done you will continue to do for it. I don't have to speak.

It has been my experience in a family that where there is a father and a mother and many children, the mother is able to get more co-operation from the sons than the father. Per contra, the sons also get more co-operation from the father through the mother. Why is this so? I think we should all think over this. It is because the husband on one side, the children on the other side, they are totally convinced of the love of the mother, and her interest in the total family. The father can promote one son who is intelligent, and neglect the other children, because the father is for success, achievement of the

ego. Mother loves. Therefore, my Master used to say, in spirituality, that there are many ways of associating with the Guru or the Master: the beloved, the friend, the master, the guide, the father. Mother is the best. So, try to imagine the Master as your mother. And in that relationship is the greatest possibility of love, honour, and spiritual progress on earth.

Now when I went to my Master in 1964, I had no idea of any of these relationships. I just went. And for me, he was a human being, he was a friend, of course, and he was a guide. And slowly I came to think He was my God. And very soon it was my conviction, that if ever God manifests before us, it can only be as our beloved Master. I am making a bold assertion to say that God cannot manifest in any other form.

Now I studied my Master, Babuji Maharaj, to find out what was it that worked in him. In every one of us something makes us work, or live. In somebody it is ambition, in somebody it is lust, in someone else it is power, in a very few it is love. What was it that worked in my Master? And like you peel an onion, layer by layer, I stripped my Master progressively of these things, one by one. His body — useless. I mean, you all have seen him, he could not even lift his own hookah. So, the body was useless. It was a container for that which worked in him. His senses — he had lost his teeth, his taste for food, mostly everything. So, the body is gone, the five senses are gone. Even his vision was getting weaker. His heart — but he himself had said he had given it to his Master. So, if his heart worked at all, it was working under his Master's instructions.

Now I was at a dead-end, you see — *cul-de-sac*. [laughter] What was it that worked in this man? I got the hint, or a clue, one evening when we were having a talk, when he said, "Your will must work even when you are asleep." The second hint came after a few years, when he said, "Even after a hundred thousand years, your will must work." And the final confirmation came when he said he was himself working with

his will for the next *mahapralaya*. That is some four hundred and thirty-two thousand million years later from now.

Now, to me that was the final proof that what worked in the Master was his will, and nothing else. From living with him for many years, accompanying him on his travels, I could see more and more that he existed only by his own will power. His will power kept him alive, his will power made him work, and his will power made him work not only today, but for almost eternity. What of his heart? Because he was always speaking about it. I think his heart worked until it came to his Master. With the co-operation of his mind and his heart he came to the spiritual path, and there he surrendered both. Because giving your heart alone without your mind is no use. You see, in society we see this sort of thing going on all the time. Giving your mind alone without your heart is no good. Giving your body without the mind and the heart is not only stupid, it is criminal, it is sinful. In marriage, the couple give to each other their body, their mind, and their heart. That is the sacredness of a marriage. If they are only giving each other bodies it is a stupid marriage, and not spiritual. It may be legal, but it is not spiritual. If they only love each other, and give their bodies to each other but don't marry, it is not moral, it is not legal, though it may in some way be better than giving only the body without the heart and the mind.

When all three are mutual, gifted to each other, without reservation, no utilization, no, for instance, anarchy, and no exploitation, that is a divine union. More than anything else, such a union is possible between a child and its mother. Therefore, I think it is the most sacred relationship. And that is why perhaps the relationship of Christ with his mother is so much praised. And it is the Sacred Heart, the *Sacre Coeur*.

So, this is the relationship which my Master emphasized as the most beloved relationship, most natural relationship, and the enduring relationship. Therefore my Master said, "Look upon your Guru as your mother." The Guru gives us

the prescription which is best for our spiritual life. I have tried to see how he worked. He worked with his will.

What is most essential for us as abhyasis? I think from what I have told you it is easy enough to understand: that with our mind and with our intellect we must have one goal, with our heart we must have only one Beloved, that means all our love is towards one person, concentrated like a laser beam. Then we have something like a bow which an archer uses. One gives the power, the direction, the *but*, as you say in French, and the heart is the arrow, the love behind it. With such an instrument, when you project this missile of love, it goes straight into the heart of the Master. He is powerless. [laughter] That is the power of love.

For spiritual practice, for sadhana, we require the mind and the intellect to show us what we have to do. It is like the headlights of a motorcar when you are driving in the dark, to show you the road. They are not given to us to search out how we can find pleasure and happiness. Not because pleasure and happiness are immoral, but because they are 'by the way'. *En passant*. [laughter] (Like in chess we say, '*en passant*'.)

In our journeys we stop for food; if there is a beautiful sunrise or a sunset we stop for a few minutes to watch it, but only a stupid fellow will put his heart there and say, "Every day I shall watch this sunset." Life throws us many things as we march on, on this journey of discovery. It is like a voyage through the mountains. A valley here, a mountain peak there, sometimes the road is very good, occasionally we have to go through a dark tunnel, but given good headlights on the car, even the tunnel has no fears for us.

This light is supposed to be shed by the intellect. The intellect used for any other purpose is a wasted intellect, a mis-directed intellect. I am normally afraid of speaking this in front of intellectual audiences like the audiences in France and in Europe, because here you have professors of this, professors of that, doctors of philosophy, a doctor of psychology, I don't

know what all. But with all my heart I believe that the Western, Occidental human being has made a terrible mistake by giving precedence to the mind and the intellect over the heart. They have done wonderful things, no doubt, but purposeless things. Because, however grand science is going to be, or philosophy is going to be, as it is understood here in the Occident, it may have given us some comfort physically, but has not contributed to even happiness. And not at all to spirituality. On the contrary, we have come to look upon life here as something with many bifurcations. Intellectual life one side, the official life on one side, the emotional life on another side, so that our lives have become disintegrated, fragmented, and naturally they are oriented towards different directions. If all the roads had only one direction, it can only be one road. If there are five roads in a junction, it means they are going in different directions. This is common sense.

So when a human being has five different *buts*: my emotional fulfilment, my intellectual fulfilment, my monetary fulfilment, it is not even necessary to think whether they can be in one direction all together. They have to pull in different directions. I mean, this is obvious.

So how to make our life one of integrated purpose? We must be able to find our material happiness, our spiritual growth, our emotional fulfilment, in one goal. Then only can we become integrated human beings. Of course, somebody in the audience may quite ask immediately, "How can I find emotional satisfaction in a Master? How can I find material success in him? How can I find intellectual satisfaction in talking to a man who has no education?"

My Master said, when I asked him this question, "The trees have no education. They have no emotional life. They have no love affairs. But they give you beautiful fruit: very sweet mangoes, very sweet apples, very sweet cherries, etc. The well water in the spring comes through mud and rocks.

But it is crystal-clear and pure to drink. So, why should we have different goals?"

So, the first problem in life is to make for ourselves one goal. Because you can see today, people who had money as their goal may have become millionaires and billionaires, but they are not happy. They are not comfortable. They have not even self-respect. Their children are going to the dogs. And they have multiple marriages. Their millions and their billions does not even guarantee a fulfilled life as a husband and wife.

Take a man of power, you see — same story. Take a professor of medicine or a professor of horology, I don't know — same story. Today if you pick out the top people in society, except for their specialty in money or wealth or economics or medicine, or whatever it is, their lives go through the same paraphernalia. They are all under enormous stresses and strains, they have difficult lives, and even more difficult, the people who live with them are very difficult to live with. They have no emotional life. So, what do they have?

Spirituality says, find that goal which contains all these things. Where, having nothing, you can be the richest person in this universe. Where, knowing nothing, you can be the wisest person in this universe. Where, loving nothing except your Master, you get the love of everybody in this universe. Where, even dying you live eternally. Look for that goal.

For this what do we need? Coming back to the same question again and again: the Master needs his will; we need the heart and a clear, well-trained, disciplined mind. When we have these two things, and we have found the Master, surrender it. "You are the better archer. Here is my bow and my arrow. You use it." Take him as your Mother, and you have all the comfort, you have all the love, you have all the riches that you need.

In Hinduism, we say in India, that what God Himself cannot give, a mother can give. And if mythology is to be believed, if religions are to be trusted, all the gods that we

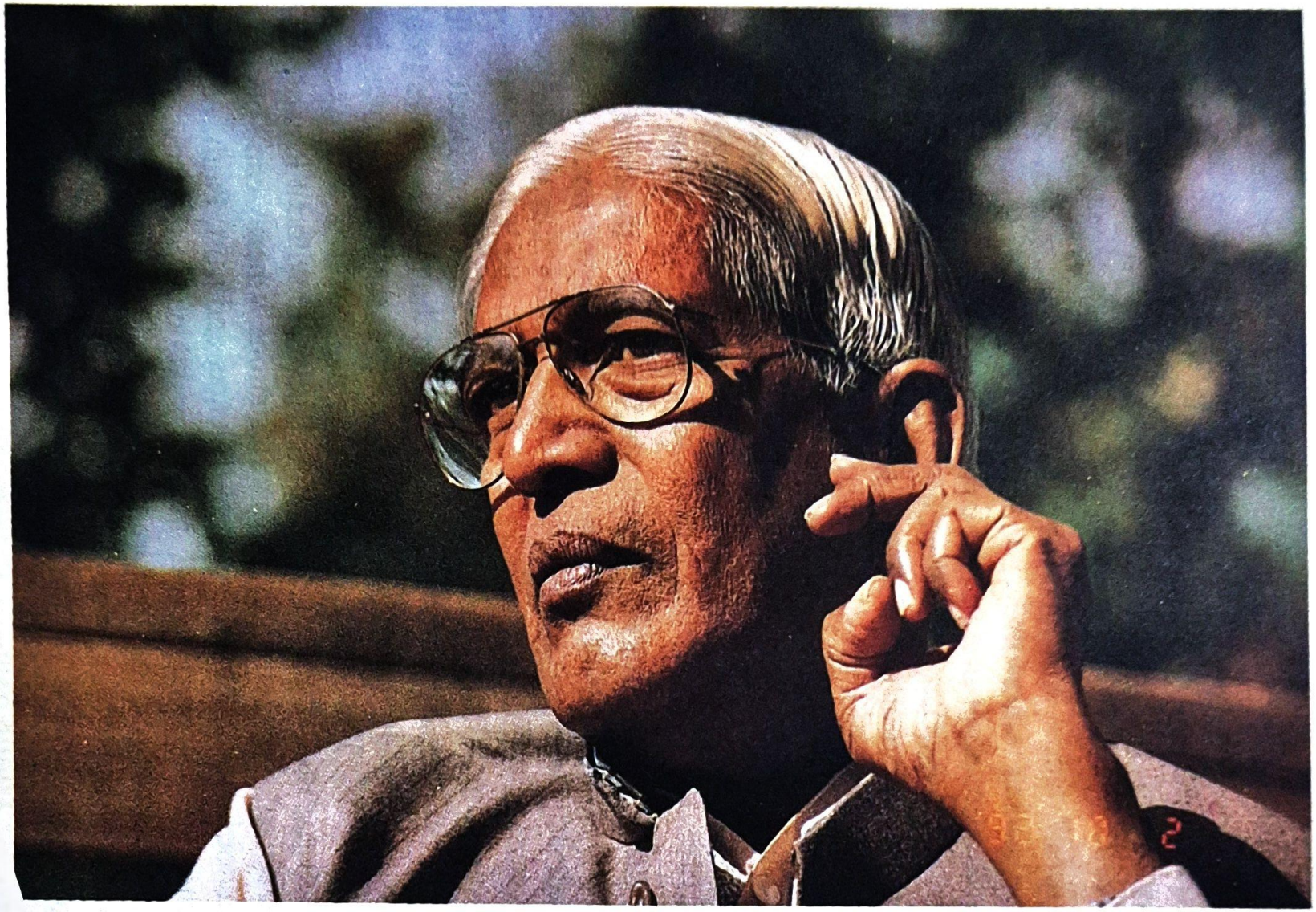
worship today were given to us by their mothers. Christ was given to us by Mary, Krishna by Yashoda, Rama by his mother. It is the mothers who have given us gods.

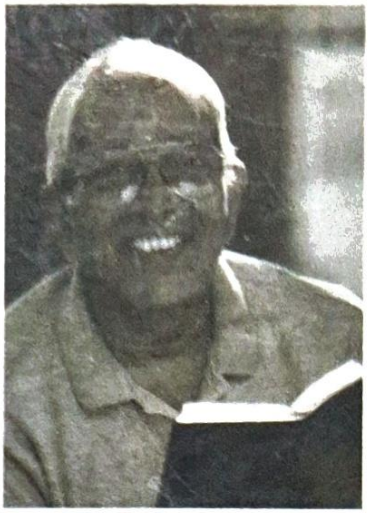
So, I hope you see the justification for my making some of these statements. I hope you will think over these things, and realise the true relationship with the Master, and then even looking for the goal becomes unimportant.

When we are children, we go home. Why do we go home? Because the mother is there. Few children ask about the father when they come home. They rush into the house, and whether it is a tale of sorrow or of pain or of success or of joy, *"Papa, ou est Maman?"* Poor father, he is only to say where the mother is. It is to the mother they go. For love, they go to the mother. For comfort, for solace, they go to the mother. And, as I said at the beginning of this talk, even to get something from the father they go to the mother. They have no other goal. The mother is the symbol of happiness, love, and protection.

The message of spirituality, as I have understood it, is very clear. Take him as your mother, you don't have to worship him as God, you don't have to love him as a Beloved, you don't have to be afraid of him, you don't have to flatter him or anything like that — not even to serve him. Because in this relationship of a mother and a son, the mother serves from day one to last day. She is not conscious that she is serving her children. The child is not conscious that it is being served. Again, this is the only relationship where without loss of self-respect, without ego manifestations, there can be this association of total love, confidence, and trust. Faith. And the mother is pouring all her love, which is the sunshine of existence for the children, and the children keep drawing it into themselves. That is the true life. Everything else is artificial.

Thank you.





Heart to Heart, Volume V

So you see, the whole secret of spiritual life is to bring Him into the present, into my present, into the now of everyone's existence, and keep Him there. I may be able to bring Him occasionally by invoking His presence, as an act of His mercy towards me, His compassion towards me, His love for me, but that is His work. If I have to bring Him, what must I do to deserve this? I must have the ability, by virtue of nothing more than my love for Him, to say, "Please come," and He must be here before me. Only love can bring God before us. Therefore, Babuji said, it is the most potent force in the universe. There is no force greater than love.

P. RAJAGOPALACHARI

The author, P. Rajagopalachari (born in India in 1927), was raised in the rich cultural heritage of the East, although educated extensively in the Western tradition. As the spiritual head and president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, he has travelled widely, meeting interested seekers throughout the world. This volume contains his talks given to both public audiences and seminars for practitioners of the Sahaj Marg system during 1990, 1991 and 1992 in North America, Europe, and South Africa.

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